

THE CYPRUS REVIEW

A Journal of Social, Economic and Political Issues

SPECIAL EDITION
RECONCILIATION IN CYPRUS

INTRODUCTION: Nicos Trimikliniotis
Reconciliation and Citizenship in Cyprus:
A Trans Communal Concept for Social Action

Laurie Johnson
Reconciliation and Peace Education in Cyprus: What Will It Take?

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Articles should be original and should not be under consideration elsewhere.

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(i) Articles should normally range between 4000-9000 words.

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(iii) An abstract of no more than 150 words should be included on a separate page.

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INTERNATIONAL PEACE-MAKING IN CYPRUS

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II. Left-align, title case, bold, italics.

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(vi) Notes should be used to provide additional comments and discussion or for reference purposes (see vii below) and should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed on a separate sheet of paper at the end of the article. Acknowledgements and references to grants should appear within the endnotes.

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Multi-author volumes:

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Articles and chapters in books:

Jacovides, A. J. (1977) 'The Cyprus Problem and the United Nations' in Attalides, M. (ed.), *Cyprus Reviewed*. Nicosia, Jus Cypri Association.

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McDonald, R. (1986) 'Cyprus: The Gulf Widens', *The World Today*, Vol. 40, No. 11, p. 185.

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Articles

VOLUME 19

NUMBER 1



INTRODUCTION

Reconciliation and Citizenship in Cyprus: A Trans Communal Concept for Social Action

This special issue of The Cyprus Review is an effort to rethink the concept of 'reconciliation': is the concept of any use in the context of Cyprus prior to a solution or can we only speak of reconciliation after a solution? Does it offer a common space for citizens' dialogue and action in the current stalemate conditions? Does it open the potential for dialogue relevant to society as a whole beyond the political elites?

The initial debate on the subject took place during a conference in the buffer zone of Nicosia, at the Goethe Centre on 23 July 2005, organised by SYMFILIOSI, IKME and BILBAN. The majority of the articles and commentaries contained in this issue are papers that were presented then and have been reworked since that conference, but the two articles on education, i.e. 'Reconciliation and Peace Education in Cyprus: What Will It Take?' by Laurie Johnson and 'Reconciliation and the Teaching of History' by Chara Makriyianni and Charis Psaltis, are additional papers commissioned for this issue.

The basic idea of this special issue is to take matters further and initiate a broader dialogue between the two communities on the concept as well as the potential for reconciliation in our society today following the rejection of the UN plan and the daunting prospect of a protracted non-solution situation. An attempt to review the concept of 'reconciliation' within the context of the accession of Cyprus to the EU and against a backdrop of uncertainty and rising nationalisms demands serious deliberation over the content, the prospects, the means and methods to be employed. A series of events since the referenda in spring 2004 have adversely affected not only the rapprochement movement but also the prospects of a dialogue at citizen level. The result is that bi-communal activities are limited to symbolic gestures of friendship and common heritage, while the hot issues which today concern and affect the average person from both communities remain under-discussed, unresolved and often fall prey to the politicians' televised discussions. As time goes by it is imperative to critically reflect the past and look to the future.

A number of issues were raised in a discussion paper that was circulated prior to the conference to trigger the debate which subsequently formed the basis for the papers that followed. Moreover, the same issues remain relevant today – the challenge to ignite any mode of spontaneous discussion to produce ideas and think through the concept of reconciliation in Cyprus. Key questions were set as follows:

1. The current situation as regards the Cyprus problem, which is characterised by 'fluidity', disappointment and in some cases even resentment, is 'colouring' every effort to think ahead, as significant sectors of both communities sink into irredentism. How is the potential for reconciliation effected?
2. A large number of people constantly 'cross over', meet and interact; however, there are also a great many people who either still refuse to cross over or remain indifferent. Some even appear content with the status quo that may solidify and consolidate the de facto partition. What does this mean for reconciliation and the prospects for reunification? How can the potential created by opportunity to meet after the partial lifting of the ban of freedom of movement be utilised?
3. 'Tested formulae' on reconciliation in other contexts as well as lessons to be drawn from others' successes and failures are obviously particularly relevant and valuable in opening a debate which has almost reached a deadlock. The familiarisation with initiatives of other communities in conflict can give a new impetus for initiatives and action in Cyprus. However, these also require a serious 'adaptation' to the specific context of Cyprus, if they are to be made useful and relevant to the experience of the island. How do we 'learn' from the experience of others? How do we connect and anchor the historical specificity of Cyprus to the experience, and of other peoples in conflict?
4. The content of reconciliation needs to be developed and articulated in order to define the terms of reference of the necessary dialogue in a new developed 'common public space' between and within the two communities and beyond. Such a dialogue has spasmodically taken place in the past; however, it requires a broadening of its basis and a deepening of its meaning. The social, political, economic, cultural, symbolic and moral dimensions of reconciliation in the particular context of Cyprus need to be elaborated to serve as the broad framework and reference point for potential citizens' actions and initiatives. Indeed, does the concept offer anything at all or should we seek alternatives?
5. The methodologies of reconciliation are a major issue for debate: who are the 'mediators' the 'articulators' and 'agents' of reconciliation? How are they linked to the political structures and processes of Cyprus and what is the role of civil society? Which social forces, strata and groups ought to be targeted and why? What is the role of citizens?
6. What is the role of education in bringing about reconciliation? What systemic changes are required to bring about peace education in the educational systems? More specifically, what sort of history education is required in Cyprus so that it promotes historical understanding, rather than hindering reconciliation and cementing segregation and division?

7. What are the means available to generate a 'common public space' for dialogue? Does it already exist in the 'traditional coexistence' or are the perceived commonalities actually 'ethnocised', partial, positional and thus differential and inadequate? What are the commonalities and differences; what are the limitations and potential for transcending the ethno-national boundaries? Is there a potential for building a normative frame for reconciliation based on the commonalities entailed in 'Cypriotness' and everydayness? Or should we attempt to move beyond such concepts as 'Cypriotness', 'Greekness', 'Turkishness', as concepts with an inherent tendency for intolerance if they become dominant? And what is that quality about the Cyprus problem that renders the public sphere of identity into a source of conflict? What role can "Europeaness" play? Are these concepts best seen as contested points of reference and must they be problematised in terms of the various social differentials? What is the link between the 'local' (i.e. the particularity of the historical specificity of Cyprus) and with 'the universal' (as elaborated in the context of European integration, global movements etc). And finally, what is the way forward for us now, in the post referendum period? Can we chart out an agenda of action for reconciliation as an essential element of reunification?

The answers to the above questions are highly complex; the papers that follow touch upon various dimensions of reconciliation, but they certainly do not exhaust the topic. On the contrary this is only a beginning; the topic is vast and will almost certainly be of major interest to any settlement idea in Cyprus. The aim here is to put together in a single volume, some of these ideas in a serious manner so that we can begin to engage on a subject that has so far not received its due attention.

Nicos Trimikliniotis

RECONCILIATION AND PEACE EDUCATION IN CYPRUS: WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

Laurie Johnson

Abstract

This paper explores the need for and challenges involved in implementing peace education in a post-conflict region such as Cyprus. The author discusses the major components necessary to pursue systemic peace education in schools as well as the contentions associated with taking such actions in a divided society. The author provides a first-person account of her research observations in Cyprus while there in 2006 as a Fulbright Scholar and calls upon lessons learned during similar work in Northern Ireland, as a means of providing a comparative backdrop. Identified efforts in the Turkish-Cypriot and the Greek-Cypriot educational systems are discussed in the context of building the infrastructure necessary for peace education to take hold, as a societal stepping stone to reconciliation, in Cyprus.

Access to education and to various forms of learning is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a culture of peace. A comprehensive system of education and training is needed for all groups of people at all levels and forms of education, both formal and non-formal. The development of a holistic approach, based on participatory methods and taking into account the various dimensions of education for a culture of peace (peace and non-violence, human rights, democracy, tolerance, international and intercultural understanding, cultural and linguistic diversity) is its main objective.

— UNESCO

Cyprus is a divided society where deep-seated feelings of injustice and mistrust on both sides of the divide have played a powerful role in obviating diplomatic peacemaking efforts over the past three decades. Clearly, politically engineered settlements will never be enough to mend the walls of fear, anger and division that have plagued the people of this small island for so long. What is obvious to those familiar with the socio-political context of Cyprus is that, far beyond diplomatic efforts to negotiate a peace settlement, there persists a fundamental need for comprehensive energies to be devoted toward building trust, mutual understanding, a sense of restorative justice and interdependence within and between the Turkish-Cypriot (T/C) and Greek-Cypriot (G/C) communities. Without taking such systemic

measures, meaningful reconciliation between the two primary communities of Cyprus cannot be achieved. Lederach (1997) has stated that, in divided societies, reconciliation requires both a 'focus' and a 'locus: a 'focus on the relational aspects of conflict and solution; and, a 'locus', the social space where people, ideas, and stories come together.

"Positive peace" (Reardon, 2001) is achieved by facilitating processes for challenge, critical examination and exploration of diverse perspectives, within and between conflicting groups in a society. Rather than simply seeking the reduction or management of violence, positive peace aims to achieve non-violent and creative conflict transformation in a society (Galtung, 1996). Conflict is defined by the human experience and, ultimately, provides the opportunity for human transformation. Conflict transformation, as a human process, seeks to "transform dysfunctional relationships among parties to a conflict and aims at creating common intellectual and value space among the parties. The creation of common intellectual and value space requires measures other than structural measures to deal with the complexities of deep-rooted conflicts" (Eralp and Beriker, 2005, p. 177).

Motivational theories have highlighted human needs as a driving force behind interpersonal conflict (Opatow, 2000); human needs for security, identity, freedom, distributive justice and participation also play a critical role in inter-group conflict (Fisher, 2000). The language of conflict is based in human affect (Jones, 2000). Some have even defined conflict as "an emotionally defined and driven process" (Bodtker and Jameson, 2001, p. 263). All of this is to say that conflict and its management represent a very human enterprise. Conflict resolution cannot be addressed effectively without taking the human factor into account; resolving conflict and pursuing reconciliation in a divided society must incorporate the human experience at all levels. In Cyprus, the almost singular reliance on diplomatic efforts to settle "the Cyprus Problem" has counter-intuitively resulted in insufficient effort being placed into building the requisite human and social capital needed for positive peace, or what Russell (1981) referred to as a "just peace".

This is not to say that Cyprus has not had a longstanding and valiant grass-roots peace movement working on the ground throughout the years. For over three decades, grass-roots bi-communal activism aimed at conflict transformation in this divided society has been at work engaging daring activists from both T/C and G/C communities in common goals (Laouris, 2004). However, despite the fact that they are locally grown activists, most of their activity over the years has been conducted through the auspices of the USA (for example, through the Cyprus Fulbright Commission) and the UN (Broome, 1998; Fisher, 2001). Bolstering this grass roots energy, Cyprus served as a testing ground in the 1990s for 'multi-track diplomacy' (Diamond and McDonald, 1996) which views social peace building (approaching peace through the human element) as the most effective means of compounding

diplomacy to produce meaningful peace in a conflict-affected society. Recent investigation however suggests that the bi-communal movement in Cyprus has lost its steam. The bi-communal activist community is reportedly feeling tremendous discouragement since the defeat of the 2004 referendum which seemed to dismiss, in one fell swoop, their decades-long struggle to promote a settlement (personal communication with US based cultural anthropology researcher, L. Modenos, 20 June 2006).

Despite these setbacks in grass-roots peace building efforts, the G/C community within Cyprus, since its accession to the EU, has been further compelled to look beyond its own borders at models of best practice in other European states. Requirements for aligning with 'the European dimension' are increasingly being articulated in the G/C public sector. At the same time, the T/C community, empowered by calls for building 'civil society' and encouraged by Turkey's seeming prospects for EU accession, also has begun to reach toward European models of best practice. One such path that the EU has promulgated encourages countries to undertake formal educational initiatives to build the human and social capital necessary for people to learn to live together (OECD, 2001). If people are ever to live interdependently with each other in post-conflict regions, they must be helped to acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes that underpin social cohesion. This means learning to understand the other, trust the other and problem-solve with the other. These are the goals of peace education, goals that are now increasingly being underwritten worldwide by formal, international initiatives such as the UN Declaration for the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010.

Peace Education

Ask twenty educationalists to define 'peace education', and twenty different conceptualisations might likely emerge. While the objective of this paper is not to operationalise peace education, it is important for the reader to understand the basic tenets upon which this paper's discussion is based. In the broadest terms, peace education can be considered to include all informed actions taken in the name of promoting the ability of individuals to live interdependently and responsibly on this earth. Fountain (1999) defined UNICEF's conception of peace education this way:

Peace education refers to the process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level.

While this article speaks to peace education as carried out through the formal school system, it is important to understand that peace education can and should take place in communities, families and workplaces as well (Reardon, 1997).

The Challenges to Peace Education in Cyprus

While the goals of peace education as stated here seem worthy enough, the notion of educating for peace in divided societies, where protracted conflict holds sway, is more elusive and contentious. This was brought home clear to me when, upon being invited to present the keynote address at an educational conference in Nicosia, I was advised not to speak about my peace education work in both the T/C and the G/C educational systems for fear that it might offend those educational authorities present in the audience for whom such discussion would represent “recognition” of the other. This advice, I was told, was given in deference to those who believe that the goals of peace education, especially those that would promote reconciliation across the divide, should not be broached in schools until a political settlement is achieved.

It has been argued that formal education serves as the medium through which a society comes to define itself. Its norms and values are articulated and transferred from generation to generation through its educational system (Glenn, 1988). Not accidentally, the educational systems in divided societies typically serve to strengthen the historical narrative of division on each side of the divide. In broken regions such as Cyprus and Northern Ireland, where post-conflict hostility and separation has been in place for decades, education serves to reinforce the past. On the island of Cyprus, two completely separate systems of education operate with virtually no inter-communications between them. In the north of the island (which is a region politically recognised only by itself and Turkey), there is an educational system that serves the Turkish-Cypriot community. In the Republic of Cyprus in the south, the educational system serves primarily the Greek-Cypriot community. Cyprus is divided by the “Green Line” which separates its two primary communities along geopolitical, cultural and religious lines and dramatically reinforces the societal conflicts that underpin the division. This means that the vast majority of children in Cyprus are educated in segregated, single-identity environments where they come into contact only with “their own,” where their classmates and teachers come from the same cultural background, and where they learn ethnocentric versions of history and national identity. Similar to Northern Ireland in this respect, the inter-relationship that exists in Cyprus between politics, culture and religion has assured links between the church, government and education. As a direct reflection of this, what is taught in the G/C school system and how it is taught is influenced by the Orthodox tradition; in the T/C educational system, the influence of religious tradition is less apparent but political influences, largely from mainland Turkey, remain significant.

Given these ethnocentric divisions in Cyprus, peace education would logically suggest itself in the pursuit of social cohesion. While in Cyprus in 2006, my work sought to collaborate with local educationalists to promote systemic peace education through the development of training frameworks for teachers and counsellors in both the Turkish-Cypriot and the Greek-Cypriot educational systems. This work primarily entailed action research and consultation with teachers, students and administrators in the schools, with faculty and trainers in university and training institutes, and with the educational authorities in both systems. I have collected both qualitative data from interviews and ethnographic observations in the schools and communities as well as quantitative data in the form of student and teacher surveys. This paper is based upon the preliminary findings of my work in Cyprus, which are presented here in the comparative context of similar work I have done in Northern Ireland.

In speaking about the goals of rapprochement between the G/C and the T/C communities, it is important to note that there are more than two groups populating this island. Beyond the indigenous Cypriot population, ethnic diversity has been increasing over the past decade as a result of globalisation, immigration, and the migration of asylum seekers and refugees (Trimikliniotis and Pantelides, 2003). According to EUROSTAT (2004) figures, non-nationals represented 9.4 per cent of the population in Cyprus in 2004, a jump from 4.2 per cent recorded in 1990. As a result of the influx of immigrants, 5.5 per cent of the primary school population and about 6.2 per cent of secondary level students in the G/C educational system are currently non-indigenous children, according to data acquired through phone correspondence with the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) 24 May 2006. This represents a total of 6,900 minority students, up from the 5,500 estimated just two years prior. For a small island, this represents a considerable diversity presence.

It is also important to recognise that the T/C community is itself not homogeneous but rather is “comprised of Turkish Cypriots who resided there before 1974 (at that time, 18 per cent of the total population was estimated to be T/C) and those who emigrated from Turkey after 1974” (Tank, 2002, p. 156). No doubt, these layers of diversity add to the complexity of pursuing peace education in Cyprus. For each of these subgroups, there are distinct socio-cultural factors that distinguish their identity relationship to Cyprus. There is little in the way of a collective national identity in the north of Cyprus. The increasing diversity has created its own form of internal inter-group conflict in the north, where expressed biases over relative status as indigenous versus immigrant are increasing. This diversity in the north has also invoked increased concerns among members of the G/C community. In the north of Cyprus, reliable demographic data as to the increasing numbers of peoples coming from mainland Turkey (commonly referred to as “settlers”) and other

developing countries is hard to garner. While “talk on the street” suggests the percentages of immigrants are beginning to outnumber the indigenous Turkish-Cypriot population, this has not been substantiated. Ethnic data gathered during a census carried out in April 2006 and just published in 2007 revealed that, out of an overall population of 256,000, about 178,000 are citizens (of the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of North Cyprus, ‘TRNC’) and that 120,000 of these are of full Turkish-Cypriot parentage, with another 12,000 claiming one Turkish-Cypriot parent (Bahceli, 2007). In “Beyond Numbers”, a demographic report published by PRIO, peace researcher Mete Hatay (2005) discounted arguments that indigenous Turkish Cypriots are being outnumbered by mainland Turks settling on the island. In referring to the census data, he concluded that, while Turkish Cypriots were a minority in the overall population, only around 24 per cent of citizens in the north of Cyprus were of mainland Turkish origin.

Since the partial lifting of the restrictions on crossing the buffer zone in 2003, hundreds of thousands have passed back and forth across the “Green Line”. Despite this increasing flow of peoples moving daily across the UN patrolled buffer zone, meaningful cross-community contact is still minimal. My research with students and teachers in both the G/C and T/C school systems during the spring of 2006 consistently found that most of the children (as well as the classroom teachers) I interviewed reported having no substantial experience with individuals from “the other side”. For most T/C and G/C youth in Cyprus, there continues to be no personally informed understanding of ‘the other’. My time in their respective classrooms however gave reason for hope: consistently, the students I came across demonstrated fascination in hearing about ‘the other side’, imploring me to give them my impressions of the other community, what they talked about and how they were seen by them.

From a systemic perspective, mistrust toward ‘the other’ continues to be reinforced on the part of children, if not by deliberate design then as the outcome of the singular ethno-political worldview they are exposed to in their schools. Among several accounts I came across in my research in the schools, I recall two that stand out as prime examples of the inter-group prejudice that still permeates these young people’s educational lives in the classroom. I recall one teacher from a rural G/C elementary school who shared this account of an incident in her classroom: following a student’s class reading of a poem that focused on the beauty of trees, the school principal who was visiting in the class that afternoon followed the reading by launching into an unsettling account of how “the Turks took away all our trees”. For these youngsters, the impact of this single event was to subtly reinforce the message of injustice and fear related to their counterparts in the north. Equally disturbing was the account shared by a T/C secondary student who said she was taught by one of her class teachers that all Greek Cypriots carry weapons, thus

reinforcing in her young mind the notion that her Greek neighbours to the south were to be feared and defended against (which she admitted to still feeling) In divided societies where children are educated in ethnically segregated systems, mistrust and hostility toward the other can be reinforced in these ways, especially when there are no other systemic opportunities built in for students to develop tolerance of differences across the divide (Church, Johnson and Visser, 2004). When people continue to harbour feelings of injustice in relation to 'the other,' as is commonly the case in post-conflict zones where acts of previous violence have destroyed lives, property and dignity, it is very difficult to negotiate coexistence (Zuzovski, 1997). Without ordinary ways for young people to learn how to live cooperatively with 'the other' on this island, how will the next generation of citizens in Cyprus be prepared to be interdependent members of the global society, let alone to achieve rapprochement between the two communities?

To build sustainable peace in this region, a dramatic change in worldview is needed, a reframed understanding of 'the other' must be developed and the insular systems that serve to propagate an ethos of division must be transformed. Only through broadly based initiatives that seek to promote social cohesion in developmental and systemic ways will sustainable peace be possible. Given the conditions of entrenched division that exist, it is clear that formal opportunities need to be provided for the youth of each community to learn about 'the other,' to gain an appreciation for mutual understanding and respect, to develop empathy and tolerance, and to build the skills and behaviours needed to live and work cooperatively not only on this island but in an increasingly diverse world. In divided societies, fear that is coupled with the absence of knowledge, precludes opportunities for social cohesion. This rings true when considered in relation to a recent G/C university study that found that one of the primary reasons people feared a settlement with the T/C community was potential loss of their religion (Cyprus Weekly, 23 June 2006).

As the term suggests, peace education is all about promoting knowledge. In examining conflict dynamics in divided societies, Lederach (1997) noted that while a lack of knowledge can contribute to conflict, it is also true that providing knowledge to people can cue conflict by raising awareness, which in turn can generate the demand for social change. In 2000-2001, while conducting action research in integrated schools in Northern Ireland (a divided society where a well acknowledged "culture of silence" cloaks the protracted conflict and inter-group animosity), I found that, despite having both Protestant and Catholic children together in the classrooms, teachers consistently avoided discussion related to the issues underpinning the conflict narrative; it was as if, through avoidance, the sectarianism could be 'swept under the carpet'. This would suggest that peace education was not systemically working in the integrated schools at that time

(Johnson, 2002). While increased knowledge can generate demands for change, the results can be positive for the entire society. By promoting open discourse on and examination of relevant conflict variables, peace education can facilitate positive movement toward change in a society ... change that would not occur without raising the awareness of the populace.

While space here does not allow for an appropriate examination of the interrelationship between ethnic identity and conflict, it is useful to note that ethnic identity development theory (Phinney, 1993) has posited that one's ethnic identity can grow over time and experience. At the basic 'unexamined ethnic identity' stage of development, categorical ethnic attitudes are automatically adopted without question or exploration and with little room for understanding the identity of 'the other'. In an effort to promote positive movement for youth toward the higher level 'identity development achievement' stage, peace education can facilitate decategorisation of 'the other' and a greater sense of pluralism, which entails looking at the world from different perspectives and accepting other cultures, languages and beliefs.

In societies experiencing inter-ethnic conflict, people are socialised in the context of discourse that is marked by 'mutual delegitimation and dehumanisation' of 'the other' (Kelman, 1997, p. 210). In these settings, young people learn to see 'the other' in mirror image (i.e. "We are good, they are bad") and are likely to grow up to be adults with a dichotomous "us/them" worldview (Volkan, 1998). This perspective obstructs reconciliation. Reconciliation requires moving from a 'conflictive ethos', where a psychological infrastructure is developed to help the individual/society cope with the adversary, to an 'ethos of peace' where self-protecting ethnocentrism is changed to a more complex, objective sense of self and other (Bar-Tal, 2000). It is through empathy (i.e. the ability to understand the feelings or experience of another) and perspective-taking (i.e. the ability to look at things from different points of view), two skills taught through peace education, that conflict can be transformed toward reconciliation. Peace education seeks to promote on the part of the school learner the knowledge, dispositions and skills needed to live cooperatively in a world where justice, tolerance, civic responsibility and environmental sustainability are valued. Peace education also seeks to develop personal capacities for seeing and negotiating the world in more collaborative ways.

While any effort at peace education represents a step forward in a post-conflict society, it is only when it is systemically integrated as an educational paradigm that it will begin to produce meaningful change. Beyond rights-based content and participatory processes aimed at individual learners, peace education must also engage the broader society and its systems. In a divided society, this means straightforwardly educating citizens about the conflict issues from multiple

perspectives, rather than avoiding them or ethnocentrically consecrating them within each community. Stand alone curricula and generic learning activities that avoid examination of the specific societal conflict issues are bound to fail at educating for sustained peace in regions where only one image of the other has been projected for decades ... an image that categorises people's ways of being, thinking and feeling.

The outcome benefits of peace education have been documented in the work of bi-communal youth camps that promote dialogue between youth in divided societies (Ungerleider, Green and McKernon, 1999). Bi-communal peacebuilding youth camp programmes, such as those run by the School for International Training (SIT) in Vermont, epitomise the best of peace education where knowledge is broadened, attitudes are changed and skills in conflict transformation are developed. In these camp programmes, T/C and G/C youth are brought together (typically for the first time ever) and are exposed to meta-perspectives on the 'Cyprus Problem' that transcend the conflict narrative of either community and provide these young people with an expanded base of information about history and the conflict. Participants come away transformed in their understanding of the Cyprus Problem and in their stance toward 'the other', they are more objectively informed, more able to appreciate both sides of the situation and more able to trust (Kosmacher and Orifici, 2002). Through the bi-communal youth camp format, peace education activities strategically promote straightforward exploration of the issues involved in the given societal conflict and thus work to deconstruct the negative power of conflict.

Post-conflict societies suffer under unique challenges when it comes to implementing educational programming that in any way hints at conciliatory recognition of 'the other'. In Northern Ireland for example, nationalistic resistance to social cohesion (on both sides of the divide) has presented significant challenges to the integrated education movement in that divided society (Johnson, 2002). Making any conciliatory move toward 'the other' is seen as treachery, and the conciliator is treated as a 'traitor' to one's home community and cultural identity. The relationship between nationalism and inter-ethnic conflict is well documented in the conflict research literature (Brown, 1997; Cozic, 1994) and indeed has implications in the case of Cyprus. Survey data collected in the spring of 2006 from Greek-Cypriot secondary school students, for example, uncovered nationalistic sentiments as the primary basis for their reluctance to interact with Turkish Cypriots (on the survey, many students supported their position with comments such as "Cyprus is for Greeks"). A recent incident where a group of nationalistic G/C youth attacked T/C youth on the grounds of a school that enrolls both G/C and T/C students further underscores the relationship between ethnocentric nationalism and inter-group conflict among youth in Cyprus (Theodoulou, 2006).

Ethno-nationalism presents significant challenges to peace education in any society. While some system-wide educational efforts have been identified in Cyprus, little that is concrete has been operationalised, let alone institutionalised, in terms of new curricula, pedagogy, policy and practice. The Turkish-Cypriot educational system is struggling against so many resource challenges that the notion of peace education has not yet taken form. However, interviews with high level educational authorities in the T/C community during the spring of 2006 suggested that peace education is now being acknowledged (at least verbally) as a natural component of the overall initiative to “build civil society” across all T/C sectors. Membership in the EU has served as an incentive for the G/C Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) to advance directives related to curricular considerations in the areas of educating for democratic citizenship and peace education in the schools (Loizou, 2005). Since EU accession, Cyprus has signed on to a number of these directives ostensibly to align more closely with the “European dimension in education”.

A Systemic Framework for Peace Education within Each Community

At this juncture in the history of post-referendum Cyprus, there appears little hope for an integrated or collaborative initiative across the divide that would enjoin both educational systems in an effort to co-educate their youth as a means of promoting mutual understanding and tolerance of differences. Northern Ireland’s home-grown efforts to develop an integrated education sector would not be feasible at this time in Cyprus, for many reasons. However, if the respective G/C and T/C communities begin to work within their own educational systems through policy and pedagogy that supports conflict transformation, then the likelihood of developing the human and social capital necessary for sustainable peace will be increased on the island overall. From a systemic perspective, the commitment to pursue peace education, in each system, would require involvement at the levels of policy and leadership, curriculum, pedagogy and teacher training. These are the bedrocks that form the infrastructure necessary for peace education to take hold.

Educational Policy and Leadership

Systemic approaches to peace education must include concerted engagement at multiple levels of the educational enterprise. System-wide strategies, policies and structures need to be established, from the individual school level up through the national ministry. This includes policy and educational leadership that promotes relevant curriculum development and follows through with resource allocation and implementation. At the highest levels of educational policy and leadership, teacher training and pedagogy needs to be reconceptualised and restructured in ways that will further ensure that educators are equipped to promote the knowledge,

dispositions and skills needed for a culture of peace. Critical field research and assessments need to be commissioned. Schools and institutions of teacher training and development need to proactively lobby the central ministries of education for broader inclusion of peace education pedagogy in their professional preparation curricula. Reviews of international models of educational policy and practice need to be incorporated in the planning.

While its efforts were not fully successful, Northern Ireland stands out as a frontrunner, among post-conflict areas, in its action at the national level to address peace education goals in its schools. In Northern Ireland, children are separated from day one: approximately 95 per cent of all children attend single-identity schools, either state controlled (Protestant) or (Catholic) church maintained schools, and as such, they have virtually no cross-community contact or knowledge of each other. Against the backdrop of a fledgling grass-roots movement to establish integrated schools, Northern Ireland enacted the Educational Reform Order of 1989 which, among other directives, implemented the cross-curricular theme of “Educating for Mutual Understanding” (shortened locally to “EMU”) as part of its national curriculum. EMU was aimed at assuring that every student in every school would be given opportunities to develop mutual understanding and cross-community contact through any range of relevant activities. While not fully implemented (partially due to the vague specifications and limited funding provided by the Department of Education of Northern Ireland), EMU stands as an example of a state-level curricular initiative taken with peace education aims, under great contention, in a divided society (Church, Johnson and Visser, 2004). Given some of the parallels between the conflict narratives of Cyprus and Northern Ireland, it is interesting to consider whether such a cross-curricular initiative might work in Cyprus. Such an effort, if ever attempted, would need to be a collaborative venture between T/C and G/C educational authorities committed to conjointly providing opportunities through the schools, for seminal cross-community contact and mutual understanding (based perhaps on the bi-communal youth peace camps’ format previously mentioned). Given the geopolitical separation and socio-cultural tensions that still define the ‘Cyprus Problem’ today, this type of collaborative initiative would be difficult, but not impossible, to implement.

Effective implementation of peace education in schools also requires active commitment on the part of the local school leadership. Local schools need to be further empowered if peace education is to be viable. The trend in contemporary educational policy-making and governance is moving toward decentralisation where decisions regarding how schools operate on a practical level are now being placed in the hands of local stakeholders. An intercultural education specialist, Pieter Batelaan (2003) refers to two types of educational management: the first type of school he terms “bureaucratic” which is rule-bound and where quality is mainly

measured by results on exams and new initiatives are kept to a minimum. The second type of school is “entrepreneurial” and is more locally determined and focused on the specific needs of the given community; these schools work “within the framework of legislation but are always looking for some space so that they can set their own goals and take initiatives; ... they are more proactive”. The trend toward decentralisation provides more opportunities for entrepreneurial-oriented schools; in such schools, the stakeholders discuss goals and methods. This “site-based management” approach to educational policy and decision-making wherein designated members of the school community come together as a planning and managerial body to collaboratively determine standard school operations and address special areas of concern is being promoted in many nations (Abu-Duhuo, 1999). The current management paradigm in both the G/C and T/C systems is highly centralised and bureaucratic in praxis. Until that centralised control is reconfigured, the system offers little incentive or flexibility for creative problem-solving on the local school community level.

While it may take time to get everyone ‘on board’ ideologically, some form of overt action needs to be taken from the outset by schools if commitment to building a culture of peace is to become more than lip service. As a first step, committed schools can develop and publicise their own ‘peace education’ mission statement as a means of specifically articulating their collective aim to value cultural differences and to promote respect for all members of the school community. As an outgrowth of the mission statement, an action plan that outlines the goals and strategies of a whole-school initiative can be formulated to serve as a framework to guide efforts over a number of years. This planning presumes that some level of local management prerogatives are in place.

My work in Cyprus included action research and consultation in a secondary school that, since 2003, has enrolled Turkish-Cypriot students among its primarily Greek-Cypriot student population. This school has experienced its share of challenges in making the transition to a bi-communal school. In spite of the distressing difficulties encountered, this school serves as an excellent illustration of how localised problem-solving and planning can be instrumental in educating for a culture of peace. As part of its site-based efforts, an advisory council comprised of representatives from all the major stakeholder groups in the school community (including parents, alumni and students) was established in 2006 as a means of collaboratively developing and implementing a “road map” to guide them over the next three years in an overall initiative to promote tolerance and interdependence across the school community. Since its inception, this advisory council has developed a mission statement, revised its code of conduct, begun work on an anti-harassment policy, surveyed its entire student population to assess attitudes about school climate, and has begun professional development sessions with its entire

faculty aligned to European Union anti-discrimination directives ... an ambitious plan of student, parent and staff trainings is expected to emanate from the survey findings and become the focus of the next phase of this brave school's systemic initiative ... all centred on promoting a culturally responsive school ethos. Although not without its daily trials, this school has made incredible progress and, in my estimation, its efforts can serve as an exemplar for the practice of peace education in Cyprus. While this school does not fall within the standard public school classification, it is nonetheless an encouraging example of how local energy can be harnessed in promoting peace education.

From an educational leadership perspective, strategies for supporting peace education across all functional aspects of the educational enterprise need to be pursued. School policy and procedures should reflect democratic principles and inclusive practices as a means of modelling the larger world outside. My interviews with teachers, observations in schools, and cursory examination of school policy and procedural frameworks indicated that these concepts have yet to be integrated into educational policy and practice in either educational system. Knowing that the socialising impact of the school experience goes well beyond learning from the explicit curriculum, school management also needs to examine its "hidden curriculum"; that is, everything implicit that impacts student learning from the pictures or images that are displayed on the walls, to the holidays or festivals that are celebrated, to the ways students and teachers interact in the classroom, should speak to the values of equity, mutual respect and interdependence. In Cyprus, the interwoven elements of religion and state are well acknowledged; the Greek Orthodox Church has an unwritten but powerful interaction with all public sector systems, most especially education. I recall talking to a G/C classroom teacher, a doctoral student in education at the time, who admonished me, when I referred to the religious symbols on the classroom walls as representing "the hidden curriculum". He stated that, in G/C schools, "religious iconography is not part of the 'hidden curriculum' at all" ... "it is purposeful and definitive" in its presence in the G/C classroom. The significant inter-relationship between education and religion in Cyprus was further reflected by the vehement emotions expressed by students (in a 'school climate' survey conducted in one secondary school) after the religious icons were removed from the walls of their classrooms as a means of culturally accommodating the T/C students who were now enrolling in their school.

While the political influence of the state was much more apparent in the T/C classrooms I visited (for example, pictures of Ataturk and famous military personnel were prominently displayed on the walls), the connection between church and the public education system was not as apparent.

Curricular Initiatives

Curricular development is critical to implementing systemic peace education in a divided society. Rather than relying on longstanding curricula that present ethnocentric perspectives, post-conflict societies need to commit to developing curricula that will expand the range of perspectives that students are exposed to and advance the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for promoting a culture of peace. Beyond developing new curricula, it is important to take system-wide efforts to assess all current texts and teaching materials that are being used in schools as a means of identifying those areas that are serving to perpetuate hegemonic understandings of history, the conflict and the current society. For system-wide change to be instituted, curriculum revision efforts are best made with collaborative involvement across the separate communities.

While education has been influenced by ethno-cultural preservationist goals throughout history, the growing model in contemporary western Europe is to utilise the education system as a medium for promoting students' understanding of their broader rights and responsibilities as citizens in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world. There is an increased understanding of the need to develop and foster knowledge, attitudes and skills that will enable young people to play their part in building a more equitable society and interdependent world. As part of this, the Council of Europe officially declared 2005 the "European Year of Citizenship through Education" and thus gave emphasis to Citizen Education as an especially promising vehicle for peace education in divided societies.

In most EU nations, citizenship education (or its local equivalent) typically follows a cross-curricular approach rather than standing as a separate subject (Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, 2004). As the Republic of Cyprus moved to EU accession, its educational reform efforts were aimed at bringing its educational system into compliance with European Union precepts and standards. Up to this point, citizenship education in Cyprus has been provided through an interdisciplinary approach and is infused into the secondary education subject areas of History, Civics, Greek Literature and Philosophy. In the G/C educational system, civic education is currently incorporated in the curriculum but has for the most part remained traditional in its content coverage and pedagogical methods. That is, contemporary efforts to incorporate diversity, human rights and social justice issues into the national curriculum as part of educating for citizenship have not been apparent in the G/C school system.

In 2003, an expert committee was appointed by the government to make a comprehensive educational reform proposal which led to recommendations issued by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC). However, these

recommendations were presented to the schools in the G/C system without a mandate for implementation. In its 2003-2004 annual report on General Secondary Education, MOEC (2005) denoted no reference to citizenship education in the curriculum but identified among its educational goals for the 2004-2005 year “developing an active democratic citizen” and “bi-communal cooperation” as part of its post-accession efforts to emphasise Cyprus’ role in a United Europe.

Over the past few years, textbooks have also been placed under the educational spotlight given their instrumental role in transmitting the dominant culture worldview to the current generation of learners. In divided states especially, when texts have not been assessed for fair and equitable presentation of information, the student user stands to suffer from a one-sided construction of knowledge. In post-conflict states, educating for a culture of peace requires that textbooks, as primary instruments for learning, be written from an equitable, inclusive and mutually responsive perspective. In 1995, UNESCO declared that textbooks should be cleared of negative stereotypes and, when presenting complex issues, should promote a sense of ‘otherness’ while offering multiple viewpoints based on scientific facts, not national or cultural background (Pingle, 1999). Textbook revision projects are moving to front stage in several post-conflict societies as part of educational reform efforts to better ensure more balanced and inclusive accounts in the education of youth regarding subject narratives, most commonly in history texts. Educational curricula in post-conflict states need to move away from the traditional monocultural perspective and move toward “multiperspectivity” which recognises that more than one perspective or interpretation may exist in history, especially over large and controversial events, and that because different groups of people see historical events differently, multiple perspectives can be legitimate. The Council of Europe (2004) has provided impetus and guidelines for history textbook revision in this vein. It has been argued that developing multiperspectivity in history curricula is the only way in which controversial issues can be discussed in a peaceful manner. Member states of the EU are increasingly responding to the Council of Europe’s call for multiperspectivity in history teaching.

In the Greek-Cypriot educational system, there were efforts initiated in the period leading up to EU accession to review the history curricula and texts; however, in the shadow of the referendum defeat, these efforts have slowed. The revision of history texts or curricula at this time continues to be somewhat contentious. There are nonetheless numbers of educationalists persisting with goals to develop revised texts and teaching guides of Cyprus’ history; some of whom are seeking the collaborative input of the Council of Europe regarding best practices for teaching history in pluralistic societies.

In the Turkish-Cypriot educational system, the textbooks in use are developed and published, by and large, in Turkey where targeted efforts have been made to revise educational texts and curricula in line with directives from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), an independent human rights monitoring body that was established by the Council of Europe (2006). As a result of these efforts, the history texts in use in T/C schools have recently been revised in ways that attempt to “ensure that issues of racism, discrimination and intolerance are adequately addressed”.¹

Conflict resolution education (CRE) is another important curricular component of peace education. CRE seeks to provide members of the school community with conflict resolution knowledge and skills as a means of equipping students to engage in problem-solving methods of addressing conflict in their lives. Skills in active listening, communication, empathy, problem-solving and mediation are all taught as part of CRE. Given the sense of being unfairly wronged and the feelings of righteous indignation that often cloak the psyche of those who live in conflict regions, forgiveness has also been identified as a constructive skill to teach in conflict resolution and peace education. It is interesting to point out that in Northern Ireland, another region which has been scarred by trauma and inter-communal conflict, forgiveness education has been identified as effective in working with children affected by the sectarian strife that still plagues the neighbourhoods of Belfast (Enright, Gassin and Knutson, 2003).

While there are many methods and modes of providing CRE in schools, best practice involves integrating CRE into and across the curriculum. While the concept of conflict resolution is certainly not new to Cypriots, it has never been implemented in the schools nor has it been part of the teacher education curriculum (see related discussion below). Most recently, a pilot offering of CRE was provided to G/C teachers and counsellors, at both the University of Cyprus and the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus, with very positive reception on the part of the participants who expressed great need for this type of training in their work. Current discussions are being held regarding continuing CRE in the teacher education curriculum. Likewise, positive advances in relation to preparing teachers in CRE are beginning in the T/C educational system (see discussion below).

Teacher Training and Pedagogy

Classroom teachers in divided societies commonly come from single-identity backgrounds through which they have had little exposure to pluralistic worldviews (Johnson, 2002). This reality alone underscores the need for training teachers in divided societies in ways that will expand their knowledge, attitudes and skills in the areas of cultural diversity, tolerance, interculturalism and social justice. Training

teachers to be equipped to practice effectively within a peace education framework is an essential part of building the infrastructure needed for success of outcomes. This view of teacher education reflects the notion of “social reconstructionism”, which conceptualises teachers as “key agents” in the process of “achieving equality and justice in society at large” (Furlong, 1992, p. 167).

Teachers need to be trained in the new pedagogy that fosters the development of cooperation, dialogue and mutual understanding among students. Discussion-oriented and group methodologies are central to facilitating a climate in the classroom that is responsive to diversity. Cooperative learning (Johnson and Johnson, 1989), as an instructional paradigm that fosters interdependence, equity and inter-group relations while honing critical thinking skills, has been widely incorporated into peace education models. Cooperative learning emphasises opportunities that promote positive interdependence rather than competition among students. Such pedagogy has significant potential for offering students skills in being able to negotiate different perspectives. Through cooperative learning methods, students come to understand that it is to their advantage for other students to do well and to their disadvantage for others to do poorly (Johnson and Johnson, 1994) thus removing the competitive incentives all too often promoted in schools. Recently trained teachers entering the G/C system increasingly have been exposed to (and at varying degrees are employing) cooperative learning strategies, most especially at the elementary school level. The G/C classroom teachers who were interviewed however indicated that there is little emphasis being placed on bringing all teachers up to standards in this methodology. In the T/C system, the teachers I interviewed were comparatively unaware of cooperative learning methodology overall, and when explained its basic precepts, they seemed quite certain it would never work in their classrooms where they report a rather set caste-system is in place (children of military personnel holding top ‘status’, followed by native born T/C’s, and then immigrants and ‘settlers’ from mainland Turkey holding lowest minority status). The biases and entitlements these teachers see at work between these groupings make social cohesion in the classroom setting, in their estimation, unlikely.

Pedagogical methods that foster critical thinking, debate, conflict resolution, tolerance-building, problem-solving and social responsibility, all of which are necessary for learning to live successfully in a pluralist society, can be creatively incorporated throughout most subjects and co-curricular activities. Some of these methods include “Circle Time” which promotes small group discussion on structured topics at the primary level; and at the secondary level, strategies can be included such as “Academic Controversy” or “Constructive Controversy”, both of which help to build student competence in making decisions about difficult issues (often involving ethnic, cultural or religious differences) and perspective-taking (Johnson, Johnson and Holubec, 1998).

Delimited efforts are currently being undertaken in both the T/C and the G/C educational systems of Cyprus, to train teachers in interculturalism and anti-discrimination pedagogy. However, systemic commitment toward implementing policy and curriculum statutes in teacher and counsellor education in these areas has not yet taken form. Teacher interviews, most especially in the T/C community, consistently uncovered strong expressions of need for more training in the areas broadly considered to be peace education (e.g. anti-discrimination, conflict resolution, harassment and bullying intervention, mediation procedures).

To be effective, the professional training of teachers must engage learning at the cognitive, affective and psychosocial levels in order to assure that not only subject content and methodology is gained but that the personal dispositions and skills needed to promote peace pedagogy in the school will be acquired. I have come across many teachers in both Cyprus and Northern Ireland who, given the sociocultural ethos that prevails in these regions, feel unable or uncomfortable to respond effectively when sensitive issues of race, ethnicity, political or religious differences are raised in the classroom. A fundamental goal of peace pedagogy is to be able to address differences in constructive ways ... this requires openness, empathy and tolerance on the part of the teacher. Fortunately, as has been demonstrated in other contexts and situations, these traits can be taught ... and learned (French, 2005; Jones, 2005)!

Since accession to the EU, educators in Cyprus have been trying to determine how best to align with a European future at the same time respecting cultural heritage and national identity. Accordingly, the notion of educating teachers 'for a new world' is slowly entering the professional education discourse. Teacher training in the areas of multiculturalism, tolerance, human rights, conflict resolution and social justice however has not been a systemically recognised goal. In response to historical divisions, Phtiaka (2002) argued that teacher education in Cyprus "needs to concentrate on the future" by educating teachers to cultivate in themselves and pass on to their pupils a deep knowledge of history, a broad social conscience, tolerance towards all kinds of differences, a good knowledge of the Turkish-Cypriot people and culture as well as knowledge of other peoples and their cultures, and a deep commitment to social justice (ibid., pp. 362-363). While professional commitment to these goals is worthy, development of these competencies should not be left up to teachers themselves to cultivate; it is the responsibility of the universities and institutes that are commissioned by the state to provide professional preparation and training for teachers and counsellors to make sure that these areas are included in the training curricula as part of carrying out their responsibility to prepare a responsible citizenry for living in a democratic society.

While initial exploration of these areas occurred in teacher training forums in the years just prior to EU accession, committed efforts have slowed a bit in reaction to

the referendum defeat. Nonetheless, there are encouraging indications that relevant curricular modules and learning activities are being offered through both pre-service and in-service training. As an example of this, I was invited to develop and teach modules on conflict transformation to both post-graduate students at the University of Cyprus and in-service teachers at the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus. As a result of the positive feedback from the participants, both institutions are considering the benefits of incorporating these training frameworks into teacher education curricula in the future.

The T/C educational system has also been slow in recognising the need for peace education principles and practices to be incorporated into teacher training. Pre-service education for many teachers in the Turkish-Cypriot school system takes place in Turkey and, as such, is not necessarily tuned to the local needs of the Cypriot schools in which they will eventually teach. Consequently, there is a great ongoing need for in-service and continuing education for these teachers.

I have interviewed teachers in the north of Cyprus who find themselves ill-equipped to teach in the classroom with an average of thirty-five students, having no idea as to how to manage the conflicts and in some cases violent eruptions that break out in class. These teachers now have to address matters of inter-group prejudice and racism, not so much related to the TC/GC conflict, but rather in response to biases demonstrated among and against settlers, immigrant and military children. These teachers are hungry for skill and strategy development in the areas of conflict resolution and anti-racism education. Recent discussions between local Turkish-Cypriot educators, community groups, and the educational authorities have generated positive movement toward this end. As an outcome of these discussions, a 'train the trainers' initiative has been explored for implementation whereby a cadre of classroom teachers, school counsellors and psychologists would be trained in peace education principles and practices to then go back to their respective schools and train the other school personnel in these principles and methods. This is a groundbreaking effort that holds sustainable promise. Another indication of interest in peace education in the Turkish-Cypriot educational system has emerged recently at the higher education level where, at Eastern Mediterranean University in Famagusta, plans are in place to open an academic specialisation in conflict resolution as part of their international relations programme (personal communication with Professor Erol Kaymak, EMU, 23 January 2006).

Conclusion

In post-conflict societies like Cyprus, peacebuilding efforts are typically met with great resistance from those who want to retain the status quo in the name of preserving cultural heritage, national identity and security. In these societies, any

effort to implement peace education requires sensitivity to the nuances that define the given conflict, the politics and the cultural groups in that unique context; there is no “one size fits all” model for educating for a culture of peace in broken societies. Certainly, this paper is only intended to scratch the surface of some of the areas of relevant consideration.

While there has been little in the way of empirical studies that validate the long-term outcomes of peace education initiatives, the educational research literature is replete with indications that peace education can play a meaningful role in inter-group conflict resolution and reconciliation. In divided societies, the truth often is that citizens are so entrenched in their own respective sociopolitical identity that any progressive call for education to undertake strategic efforts to promote different ways of knowing and being on the part of the nation’s youth falls on deaf, if not resistant, ears. It is not so much the notion of promoting peace across cultural groups that invokes the resistance, as much as the fear of what promoting peace across sociopolitical lines will mean in terms of loss of identity and hegemony (Duffy, 2000). The pursuit of social cohesion between peoples who have been engaged in protracted inter-ethnic conflict, where social identity needs compound with significant political, value and power differentials, is a process fraught with obstacles (French, 2005). Peace education presents a particular challenge in Cyprus where the respective G/C and T/C communities have identity-based views about the role of education. As is the case in Northern Ireland, much of the problem occurs not in the schools but in the home where young people acquire the ethnopolitically entrenched opinions of their parents (Duffy, 2000). A dynamic form of peace education that engages the family and the community in the process is therefore imperative.

This article has attempted to discuss the concept of peace education as a pathway to reconciliation in divided societies; specifically it has attempted to examine the primary components of implementing peace education in Cyprus, taking into account the educational systems of both of its communities, Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot, and making note where useful of comparative efforts in Northern Ireland, another divided society. The fact that Cyprus is a segregated society with completely separate school systems reflecting significant cultural and language differences, seemingly makes the prospect of an integrated or island-wide peace education initiative untenable. Thus, peace education in Cyprus, for now, needs to be pursued within each system in ways that will promote new ways of thinking and being among the members of its own community (see discussion on single-identity conflict resolution strategies in Church, Johnson and Visser, 2004) and, at the same time, open doors for collaborative efforts to bridge between both systems where feasible (such as in cross-community contact schemes). Recent accession to the EU for Cyprus, and current efforts by Turkey to qualify for

admission to the EU, allow for some hope that improved articulation between the G/C and T/C educational systems might be feasible in the future. The establishment of an integrated school in Nicosia and ongoing efforts at third level educational institutions in both communities to incorporate inter-culturalism, conflict resolution and anti-bias education into their curricula are steps in the right direction.

It is quite clear that there are both longstanding challenges as well as recent prospects at work in today's Cyprus that simultaneously are colouring the feasibility of educating for peace within and between its two primary communities. For peace education to meaningfully effect social change, it will need to be a collective venture (both within and between communities) that transcends the individual perspective and sociocultural assumptions while still incorporating the contextual variables that touch upon individuals' lives. Individuals and systems will need to take risks and openly engage in dialogue that works to examine the constructs of conflict in their life and operations. For it to work, peace education needs to be systemically embraced from the "bottom up" and "top down". Every aspect of the educational enterprise, from policy to curriculum to pedagogy, needs to be a part of the infrastructure. All civil society stakeholders (including schools, universities and training institutions, teachers, students, unions, parents, community organisations, private and public sector employers, policy-makers and government agencies) need to be collaboratively engaged in the process. The populace needs to see it as a worthy and necessary endeavour for the betterment of their society, most especially for the betterment of the children of their society who will live in a globalised world much different than the one they have known in previous generations.

Presenting initially as fearful territory, peace education requires that individual citizens take a step back and ask themselves, "What are the skills, knowledge, values and attitudes most important to impart for the next generation?" At the end of the day, this societal imperative is no different in Cyprus than in other settings. Peace education is not a panacea, only a pathway to a brighter future for our children.

Note

1. The Council of Europe's 'Third Report on Turkey' (2006) reported that its independent human rights monitoring body, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), was informed by the Turkish authorities that they have set up human rights education courses and have improved those already existing at all levels of the education system. These courses are taught as part of civics courses, which also ensure

that pupils learn about democracy. ECRI monitors whether school textbooks and official examination subjects may convey negative views of some minority groups, particularly Armenians. The authorities have informed ECRI that they are currently revising textbooks with a view to removing all references which are xenophobic, contrary to human rights or convey negative representations of certain minority groups. ECRI also notes that, alongside this initiative, a civil society group also concerns itself with identifying all prejudices and negative stereotypes in school textbooks.

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THE TEACHING OF HISTORY AND RECONCILIATION

Chara Makriyianni and Charis Psaltis

Abstract

The question of history teaching and learning in Cyprus often comes to the forefront of public debate, mainly in the daily press, as a contest between those who wish to change the school history textbooks and those who want them to stay as they are. Although such discussions are useful, in this paper they are of secondary importance to the question of what the aims are, the methodological weaknesses and, more fundamentally, the epistemological assumptions of the current way history is being taught and learned in Greek-Cypriot schools of Cyprus. As this paper shows, one of the most important problems of teaching and learning history today in Cyprus is the understanding of history teaching by many educators as a mere transmission of beliefs and the presentation of the past as heritage. Not only this state of affairs does not promote historical understanding, but it hinders reconciliation cementing division. We conclude with a call for urgent educational reform in the epistemology, aims and methods of history teaching and learning in Cyprus.

Introduction

Discussions about the methodology of history teaching in the Cypriot classrooms and the nature of historical knowledge in relation to reconciliation are rarely, if ever, the topic of public debate. On the contrary, the mere thought of revising the school history textbooks sparks, almost always, heated debates on the content of history textbooks and the terminology used to describe sensitive periods of the history of Cyprus. One reason for this dispute over content might be the belief, which some historians hold, that 'it is easier to change curricula and textbooks than to change the way teachers teach' (Pawlovitch, 2004, p. 68). The change of content often becomes more difficult in the context of post-conflict societies characterised by mistrust for the 'other'. Educational policy officers sometimes see the change of history textbooks just as a tool in the politics of an ideological struggle, hence victimising the need for constant improvements in the teaching and learning of history – improvements that go well beyond the mere content of a textbook by addressing issues of epistemology, pedagogy and methodology.

It could be argued that the professional development of teachers and their training in making use of the most effective, up-to-date pedagogical methods should be the primary aim of educational policy makers irrespective of any attempts for reconciliation. In effect, any efforts to change educational guidelines and textbooks would be operating in a theoretical vacuum unless there is also a change in the epistemology and methodology of history teaching. Even the 'ideal' textbook, would not be of much use in the hands of a teacher that misapprehends the nature of historical knowledge thus failing to promote historical understanding. At the same time, the answers given to epistemological questions like 'what is history', 'what is historical knowledge and understanding' and 'how can history be taught', have important ramifications on how the 'other' is presented.

In this article, we argue that the professional development of teachers is a process that not only could promote the betterment of the learning and development of pupils, but could also contribute greatly to co-operation. More particularly, in this paper, we consider an epistemological turn towards a critical and reflective stance on history teaching, not only as a major contribution to the advancement of history teaching and learning, but also as a crucial ingredient in any effort to bring together all communities of Cyprus, across the existing divide. Such a paradigm shift, in education in general and history didactics in particular, would enable educators of Cyprus to critically examine the role of ideology in promoting what Kitromilides (1979) identified as the 'dialectic of intolerance'. In his penetrating historical analysis, Kitromilides tracks down the transmission of irredentist Greek nationalism in Cyprus and the emergence of the corresponding Turkish-Cypriot nationalism, which developed belatedly, 'as a by-product of three interlocking pressures: British manipulation, reactions to the Enosis movement and mainland Turkish influence' (ibid., 1979, p. 165). The conflict of these two nationalisms, despite their appearance at different points in time, eventually led to the separation of the island (ibid., 1979). The role of education was instrumental in nurturing the widening of this gap.

We conclude this paper with a call for educational reform and resolution of the paradoxes and tensions identified in the present aims of history education; an appeal for critical and rational educational praxis informed by research and based on progressive pedagogy, all-inclusive content and constructivist epistemology.

Heritage and History

Lowenthal (1998) distinguishes between heritage and history. When school 'history' is understood and taught as heritage it deliberately omits certain aspects of the past and thrives on ignorance and error; its nurturing virtue is bias and its essential purpose prejudiced pride. Heritage transmits exclusive myths of origin and continuity endowing a select group with prestige and common purpose, is held as

'a dogma of roots and origins and must be accepted on faith' while the past is used as a weapon. History, in contrast is disinterested and universal, in the sense that no group has exclusive claim to particular stories or to truth. Bias is a vice that history struggles to eliminate (even if it cannot claim to communicate absolute truth). History conforms to accepted tenets of evidence and is subject to debate; it is always altered by time and hindsight. One consideration in assessing history is learning how to question a historical account, to become aware of the evidentiary base upon which it rests, and to assess it in relation to contrasting accounts.

The two opposing terms of reference have been put forward in the past by a variety of researchers under different names. For example, Wertsch (1997, 2002) instead of talking about heritage and history, refers to collective memory and history, and Seixas (2000) distinguishes between collective memory and disciplinary approach to teaching history. In the field of social psychology, Moscovici (1984, 1998) speaks of shared forms of knowing making a similar distinction between social representations based on belief and social representations based on knowledge (cf Jovchelovitch, 2006). The distinction is premised on the idea that characteristics of beliefs are homogeneous, affective, and impermeable to experience or contradiction that leave little scope for individual variation, and are similar to the 'dogma' characteristics that Lowenthal attributes to heritage. By contrast, social representations founded on knowledge are similar to Lowenthal's history since they are more fluid, pragmatic and amenable to the proof of success or failure and leave certain latitude to language, experience and even to the critical features of individuals.

Heritage and Nationalism

Heritage and nationalism are both premised on the same epistemological foundations that support the promotion of prejudiced pride for one's own group, the suppression of the other's point of view and the promotion of exclusive forms of identification and purity. Nationalism can only be described as being served by heritage and not history, and as promoting social representations based on belief, not knowledge. However, teaching history as dogma (in other words, teaching history as heritage, based on representations of belief) poses serious problems for learning:

If historians, curriculum experts, textbook writers and school authorities make all the decisions about the right version of the past, then the students' only job is to absorb it. What started out as contentious, debate-ridden investigation about truth, right and meaning in the past and present ends up before the students as a catechism to be memorised (Seixas, 2000, p. 23).

We argue that both nationalism and teaching history as heritage suppress and lead to atrophy the pupils' critical faculties. Moreover, in order to promote the nationalist ideology through the teaching of history as heritage, the quality of social relations between educators and pupils is reduced to a particular form of transmission that hinders the examination of the other's point of view and stifles unconstrained dialogue.

Two distinct moral stances are thus implied between interacting subjects (i.e. educators, pupils) when constructing the past as history or when transmitting the past as heritage. As Piaget ([1932] 1965) convincingly argued in his classic work on the moral judgment of the child, there are two basic orientations in social interaction: social relations of constraint and social relations of co-operation. Where there is constraint because one participant holds more power than the other, the relationship is asymmetrical, and, importantly, the knowledge which can be acquired by the dominated participant takes on a fixed and inflexible form. Piaget refers to this process as one of social transmission; such as for example the way in which elders initiate younger members into the patterns of beliefs and practices of the group.

By contrast, in relations of co-operation, power is more evenly distributed between participants and a more symmetrical relationship emerges. Under these conditions, authentic forms of intellectual exchange become possible, since each partner feels free to express his or her own thoughts, consider the positions of others, and defend his or her own point of view. Under these circumstances, where thinking is not limited by a dominant influence, the conditions exist for the emergence of constructive solutions to problems, or what Piaget refers to as the reconstruction of knowledge rather than social transmission of superficial beliefs. The reconstruction of knowledge supports the emergence of a norm of reciprocity between the interacting partners and the advancement of the autonomy, reflection and novelty in the reasoning of pupils. Here the knowledge that emerges is open, flexible and regulated by the logic of argument rather than being determined by an external authority. In short, relations of co-operation provide the arena for the advancement of reasoning and the moral development of the child, which for Piaget requires the absence of any constraining influence either based on the imposition of authority or coercion (for more recent empirical evidence of this see Psaltis and Duveen, 2006, 2007; Duveen, 2001, 2002a, 2002b; Psaltis, 2005a, 2005b; Duveen and Psaltis, in press; Zittoun et al., 2003).

Here we have the important theoretical link between the two forms of knowing with the two types of social relations. History teaching and learning that take the form of social relations of constraint can be described as social representations based on belief (what Lowenthal termed heritage). On the contrary, history teaching

and learning based on social relations of co-operation can promote social representations based on knowledge (what Lowenthal termed history).

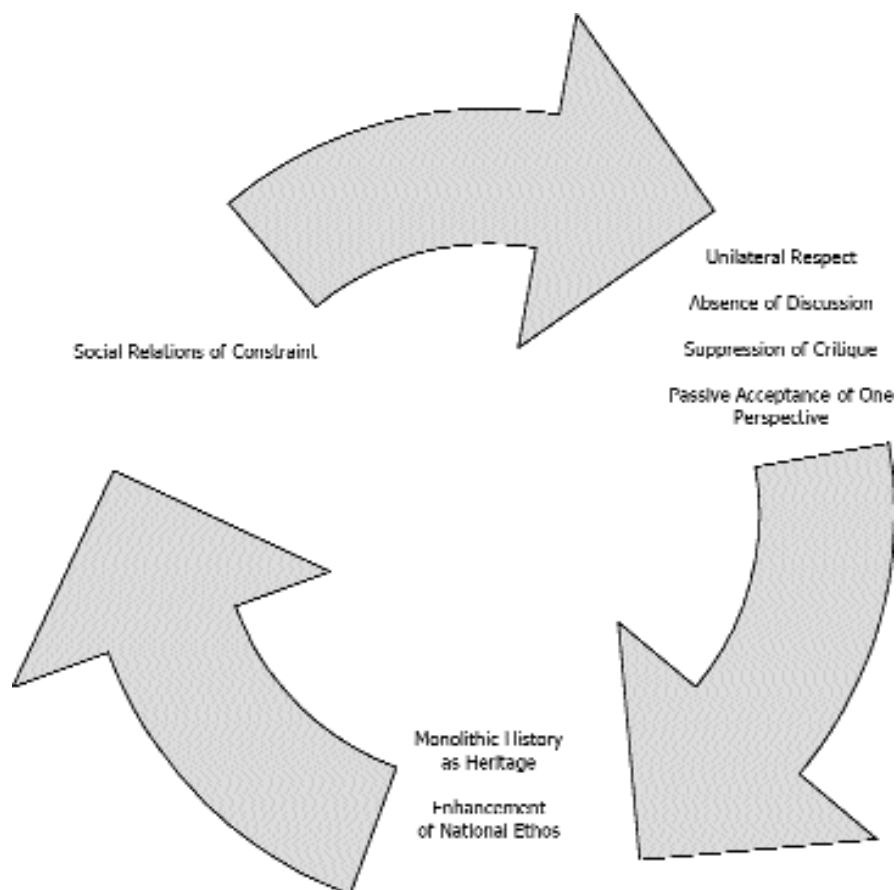
We could thus argue that the epistemology, morality and praxis of history teaching are different from the epistemology, morality and praxis of heritage teaching. History assumes a social constructivist epistemology or a stance of reflective reasoning. This is the third way between the two epistemological radical positions of naïve realism and naïve relativism. Naïve realist pupils assume that all the documentary sources are essentially authorless and describe reality in an unmediated, accurate manner. Naïve relativist pupils think that because accounts conflict in their testimony, understanding an incident is all about whose opinion you believe and one opinion is as good as another. One problem with these radical epistemological positions is that they furnish the core of the nationalist ideology since pupils that understand the past as heritage, will tend to restrict the opportunities for reflection and critic and exhibit what Schatz, Staub and Lavine (1999) call blind patriotism.

Pupils that exhibit blind patriotism show an inflexible attachment to their nation, unquestioning positive evaluation, staunch allegiance, and intolerance of criticism because they believe that any criticism towards their own group will undermine the national cause and consider traitors those who do so. The teaching of heritage promotes blind patriotism in that it aims to enhance feelings of attachment to one's country or nation, at the cost of excluding all others who do not fall within the boundaries of the own-group. Thus the 'other's' point of view is not encouraged to be heard and if by any chance it does come to the arena of discussion it is then suppressed because it undermines the objectivity of the accepted official historical narrative that is taken as the absolute truth. Blind patriotism is similarly linked with the promotion of conspiracy theories (see Moscovici, 1987) and propaganda.

The suppression of the other's point of view can only be based on an asymmetric social relation of constraint where the authority imposes restrictions on what can be communicated and in what way. What takes place is not construction of new knowledge; novelty can not emerge out of such forms of communication. What takes place is the social transmission of beliefs through conformity to and imitation of the views of authority. Such monological views suppress the cognitive and moral development of the child since they nourish its egocentric, or ethnocentric; what Piaget ([1932] 1995, [1933] 1995, [1945] 1995) called a sociocentric way of thinking where one's perspective is taken as the absolute truth. In this way the promotion of an active and critical citizenship is hindered. The agency and autonomy of the pupil in a relation of constraint by nationalism is diminished since the group imposes a single dominant view on the members of the group. Belief is monoperspectival because it aims at the enhancement of national

identity through the transmission of a single monolithic historical narrative. The other's voice, perspective and agency needs to be suppressed because it is conceptualised as a threat that can compromise the ethnic identity or the fighting morale of pupils. The form of social identity promoted for a pupil that takes part in this communication is one of exclusive belongingness to the only group that has rightful historical ownership on a country. In this way a circular connection is put in place between relations of constraint and monolithic history, which in turn puts into place a circle of intractability where separation between the two groups is gradually cemented (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: The Vicious Circle of Intractable Conflict



Recent approaches to the pedagogy of history teaching are premised on an epistemological orientation of a 'balancing' act between the naïve realist and the

naïve relativist position (see Lee, Dickinson and Ashby, 1998; Boxtel & Drie, 2004). Pupils and teachers who occupy the middle ground between these two extremes, are able to reason for their historical interpretation, and offer to their audience a justification for their point of view, which is based on the premise that the 'other' is a rational being that can understand their reasoning. In this way forms of social recognition are communicated, where the 'other' is recognised as a thinking subject and not a means to one's ends. Pupils, and teachers, listen to the opposing points of view of physically or symbolically present conversation partners, and take each of them into account. The point of view is not taken as a distraction from objectivity but as an additional source of information; as an aid for arriving at a more objective and decentred standpoint.

In decentring from their point of view pupils begin to conceive their own perspective as only one perspective among many others. In this way, the pupils' perspective no longer represents the absolute truth. It is therefore possible – through the co-ordination of two different, even opposing perspectives – for a new, more rationally advanced form of knowledge to emerge. This is the enactment of Piagetian social relations of co-operation described both as an ideal and a method that promotes the cognitive and moral development of the child. At this point, it should be noted that the two distinctions between 'heritage and history' and 'constraint and co-operation' should be read as the two opposite ends of a continuum and as such they only describe orientations and not 'black or white' dichotomies. These distinctions are so powerful and clearly embedded in the enlightenment project that the social theory of Habermas ([1981] 1987, [1983] 1990) draws explicitly on them.

The orientation to co-operation as decentration is a value worth striving for since it comprises the alternative to both the instrumental rationality of modernity and the traditional forms of authoritarian coercion and legitimisation. Despite its ideal form, the orientation to unconstrained dialogue is a useful compass for critical action and the overcoming of democratic deficits. More particularly, in the Cypriot context such an orientation can provide the philosophical and moral basis for what could be described as the dialectics of co-operation. The application of these views to the way that teachers can approach the curriculum is instructive. The recognisable personal agency behind curricular power can rest on non-governmental organisations or organised schools. In the first instance, civil society is an open space for the communication and sharing of narratives. In the second context, a school that is an open space for different narratives can become socially inclusive, engulfing embracing forms of identity. In this way, through the forms that communication takes, the values of deliberative democracy are promoted in our everyday educational praxis. In both contexts, the nurturing virtue is a real and unconstrained by coercive forces dialogue, based on mutual respect.

The Cypriot Context

Reflecting on the situation of history teaching in Cyprus from the perspective furnished in the previous sections of this paper can be instructive. Broome (1998) argues that in the case of Cyprus 'the past has been distorted beyond recognition by the educational systems and political propaganda of both sides'. And it is 'such one-sided interpretations of historical events' that 'push the two communities further apart and allow little room for healing processes'. Indeed, it is expected that half a century of separation between the two major communities of Cyprus would have already created symbolic resources (see Zittoun et al., 2003) and ways of communication that tend to preserve the system of separation. In places with a history of conflict it has been observed that a vicious circle of intractable conflict is put into place that makes moving forward difficult, if not impossible (Coleman, 2004). In the present context we suggest that particular official historical narratives act to legitimise the conflict and reinforce the status quo in Cyprus through support to a dialectic of intolerance (Kitromilides, 1979). The roots of this dialectic of intolerance are historically intertwined with the ideological orientations of the educational system.

Ideological Orientations in the Greek-Cypriot Schools in the Last Century

A brief analysis of the evolution of the dominant ideological orientation of the Greek-Cypriot educational system brings to light the authoritarian and asymmetric source of legitimisation of a particular version of history that makes unwarranted claims of objectivity. A critique of nationalist ideology also makes visible the nature of ideological constraints that, amongst many other factors, contributed to the psychological alienation of the two communities and led to conflict. Also, they functioned as contributing factors to the coup in Cyprus by the Greek junta, and then to the invasion by Turkish troops in 1974 that imposed by force the geographically demarcated ethnic separation of the island – a geographic segregation that had already started in 1964 with the withdrawal of Turkish Cypriots in enclaves and the division, initially of Nicosia, with the drawing of the 'green line'.

Education in the period of British Colonial Rule (1878-1960) has been widely researched (see Persianis, 1996, 2003; Yiangou, 2004; Koutselini-Ioannidou, 1997; Panayiotou, 2005). According to Persianis (2003) the first fifty years of colonialism (1878-1931) saw a more liberal and laissez faire policy regarding the nationalist orientations of the education provided for Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots. Given (1998) characterises the years 1900-1930 as the 'philhellenic' period of British colonialism in Cyprus.¹ In contrast, after 1931 there was a more direct effort to promote instead a sense of local identity, that of 'Cypriot patriotism' (ibid.). Schooling, thus, became a principal means deployed by authorities for colonial

ideological control. For Greek Cypriots the essential features of 'Hellenism' within the curriculum were the Greek language, history and geography. In regards to history, whereas in most British colonies compulsory teaching of British history antagonised nationalist teachings of local history, in Cyprus rulers encouraged Cypriot history to counter Greek-Cypriot nationalists who defined themselves as Hellenes and sought to preserve and promote Hellenism (Yiangou, 2004). In this distinctive context, Greek Cypriots voiced grave discontent at educational impositions aimed at fostering a Cypriot identity. The elimination of Greek history teaching in the elementary schools also provoked strong protest from Church leaders (Myriantopoulos, 1946). In this climate of ideological struggle between Greek-Cypriot nationalism and colonialism, any possibilities for a liberal political culture were eradicated by the polarisation of the groups in conflict. This, polarisation gave birth to a 'dialectic of intolerance' (Kitromilides, 1979), which materialised, penetrating all expressions of political life, as an intolerant attitude of the nationalist ideological orthodoxy towards any critical, dissident or opposing views. Whereas the link between history teaching and nationalism can be easily shown through a historical analysis, it is a much more demanding task to demonstrate how teaching history from a nationalist perspective first suppressed the advancement of the pedagogy of history education in Cyprus and then promoted an intolerant attitude towards 'the other', that still contributes to the current stalemate.

Dogma as Intolerance

The term 'orthodoxy' to describe nationalism in the previous paragraph is of course not just a play on words. The Church of Cyprus, as the main source of propagation of the nationalist ideals, along with the Greek-Cypriot elite educated in Greece, resisted all attempts of the British to 'de-hellenise'² the island. According to Spyridakis,³ (1962) survival of the Greek population despite long occupation of the island by several conquerors was due to the preservation and consciousness of national identity and Christian orthodoxy. The Helleno-Christian orthodox ideology known as *ellinohristianismos* reached its peak during the 1955-1959 EOKA⁴ armed struggle for enosis (Panayiotou, 2005, p. 3). The early take over of the nationalist project by the Church, as was also the case in Greece, partly gave Greek-Cypriot nationalism its conservative and authoritarian form (Kitromilides, 1979). This intolerance towards the others' voices was fuelled by an uncompromising, fighting spirit of resistance against a perceived identity threat. It was the same sense of fear of losing a 'super-stable' and essentialist identity that contributed to an escalating psychological distance between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, who were becoming more and more nationalised as 'Greeks' and 'Turks' of Cyprus.

Independence in 1960 marked the birth of Cyprus as a bi-communal Republic intended to bring together people of different ethnic identities and different national

orientations. However, as Panayiotou (2005) argues, the concepts and contents of national narratives and frameworks imported from Greece and Turkey, and vernacularised mainly through the educational system, instead of supporting the newly founded bi-communal Cypriot nation-state, suggested the existence of two rival ethnic communities claiming to be part of the nations of the neighbouring states. By the 1960s, the discourse of Cypriot identity was almost eclipsed – Cyprus officially, even in its constitution, was inhabited by ‘Greeks’ and ‘Turks’ and three small religious groups. As Karageorgis (1986) observes

the Independence period resulted in the educational system, which should have promoted co-operation and trust, remaining beyond the responsibility and control of Central Government. The two communal chambers, Greek and Turkish, under which the education system of the newly born republic functioned, looked towards their respective mother countries for educational policies, objectives, and orientations. It would not perhaps be an exaggeration if one maintained that education not only did not support, but undermined the very existence of the State which it was meant to serve (Karagiorges, 1986, p. 152).

Helleno-Christian orthodox ideology was personified by Spyridakis, as President of the Greek Communal Chamber who stated in 1962 that educational policy ‘had to avoid any action that contributed to the formation of Cypriot identity’ (Koutselini-Ioannidou, 1997, p. 400). The Zurich-London agreements by the later Minister of Education were glossed as ‘a temporary solution in the absence of any other alternative’ and the education of Greek Cypriots was seen as

the most precious possession, with one hope only: that the right of self-determination will not be long in being applied to them. The Greek people of Cyprus have never ceased to think and to feel like the rest of the Greek people in the Greek mainland. A Cypriot state might have come into being but not a Cypriot nation (Spyridakis, 1962, p. 23).

After the 1963-1964 climax of intercommunal strife, the unilateral establishment of a Ministry of Education that catered for the ideological needs of Greek Cypriots as Hellenes who happened to live in Cyprus was another manifestation of an ideology that excluded Turkish Cypriots from participation in the decision-making processes of the Republic of Cyprus. The assumption, which largely remained unchallenged, was that since Cyprus was historically a Greek place, Turkish Cypriots should have only been granted minority rights. Such an attitude conflicted head on with the separatist policies of Turkey and TMT⁵ and their own manipulation of education to serve the nationalistic end of taksim (An, 2005).

The 1974 coup staged by the colonels in Greece and their EOKA B collaborators in Cyprus was followed by the invasion of Turkey, which brought loss

of human lives, the missing people and many displaced. These radical changes raised many unanswered questions about fundamental values, human rights, citizenship and the national identity of Greek Cypriots. In addition, the role of the Church and the ideal of enosis were questioned (Karagiorgos, 1986). Disorder and uncertainty brought the Greek-Cypriot educational system to a crisis of ideological orientation. A general ideological reaction to the 1974 events came from Neo-Cyprians and the left-wing party AKEL who favoured a new Cypriot identity that would embrace all ethnic communities on the island, advocating reinforcement of the Republic of Cyprus as an independent state, and prospects of rapprochement with Turkish Cypriots (Karagiorgos, 1986; Mavratsas, 1997, 1999). By contrast, the official Greek-Cypriot reaction urged for in-group unity, highlighting the important role of education in the preservation of the Greek national ethos. The then Minister of Education, Dr A. Mikellides, on 3 June 1975 in a meeting organised by the cultural section of the Greek-Cypriot Primary Teachers' Organisation (POED), Nicosia, declared that 'unite and, acting like brothers, try to fulfil our holy mission. Save our education, because by saving it you save this outpost of Hellenism' (cited in Karagiorgos, 1986, p. 152).

The identification of Cyprus as the outpost of Hellenism clearly suggests that the 1974 rupture in terms of educational policy was closed by a policy that was determined by an essentialist discourse of Cyprus as Greek and resistance to the Turkish occupation. In 1976, attempts to promote educational reforms based on the principle of democratisation with a more Cypriot-centred focus were heavily criticised by right-wing, conservative parties and the Church, who opposed anything but total identification with the Greek educational system and pressed for cancellation of the reforms.⁶ A change of government in Greece in 1980,⁷ bringing the socialist party to power, created a new dynamic on the political scene as identification of the Greek-Cypriot state school curriculum with that of Greece seemed to compromise views from all parties – the right-wing that advocated identification of the Cypriot with the Greek educational system as the educational ideology and policy, and the left-wing parties who favoured changes introduced by the Greek socialist government.

In 1990 the Republic of Cyprus submitted an application to join the European Union. The process of harmonisation naturally brought pressures for all-inclusive forms of educational policy and multiculturalism. However, the years 1993 and 1998 saw the Republic of Cyprus with a right-wing government, elected for two consecutive administrations and promoting 'Greece-Cyprus Unified Education'. The actual term used to characterise the philosophy and priorities of education offered in Greek-Cypriot state schools at that time was 'hellenocentric education' (Papanastasiou and Koutselini-Ioannidou, 1999, p. 169). This policy met with both strong support and opposition (ibid).⁸ A survey in 2000 showed that the large

majority of Greek-Cypriot teachers and parents approved the education policy of 'Greece-Cyprus Unified Education' (Koutselini and Michaelidou, 2004). The overall aim of education reveals that the rights promoted are those of the Greek speaking, Christian Orthodox citizens, and confirms that state values and goals focus exclusively on securing the civil liberties of the largest Christian religious and ethnic group on the island:

The general aim of the Greek Cypriot Education is the creation of free, democratic and autonomous citizens with a well-rounded, developed personality, intellectually cultivated, virtuous, healthy, active and creative, who would contribute with the work and mindful actions in social, scientific, economic and cultural progress of our homeland and in the promotion of collaboration, understanding and love between human beings and peoples, aiming at a predominance of freedom, justice and peace and with explicit orientation to the idea of free homeland, our Greek identity and our Orthodox Christian tradition (Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus, 1996, p. 17).

In a seemingly unproblematic way, the traditional nationalistic representations of Cyprus as Greek are made to cohabitate with concepts like the promotion of autonomy, social scientific and cultural progress and collaboration. The latter concepts, however, are incompatible with the enactment of *ellinohristianismos*, which dominated for years, premised on the dialectic of intolerance, the political and educational sphere, albeit in various forms and shades.⁹

When it comes to the aims of history teaching the mono-perspective view of history teaching as heritage and promotion of the national ethos starts to reveal itself. The history curriculum for primary education reads:

The aim of the subject of history is to help pupils to become familiar, appreciate the historical life and cultural heritage of Cyprus and Greece, and construct a national consciousness as members of the Greek nation and as citizens of a semi-occupied Cyprus (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1996, p. 133).

Primary school history aims are broken down to objectives that are more specific; for example 'to understand the tragedy of our homeland, as a result of the coup d'état and of the [T]urkish invasion and occupation and to strengthen their fighting morale for national justice' (*ibid.*, p. 134). Here the promotion of an uncompromising fighting spirit comes in contrast with objectives such as 'to understand the human relations that are necessary for the harmonious living together of people' and to 'appreciate the productive role of international organisations and the importance of peaceful procedures in solving the differences between states' (*ibid.*, p. 133).

The aim of the history curriculum for secondary education seems to support a humanist approach to the teaching of history and the development of historical understanding and this orientation is presented as being in absolute harmony with the wider aim of Cypriot education.

The subject of history is mainly a humanitarian subject and its general aim, that is, the construction of a historical consciousness and the development of historical thinking is in absolute harmony with the wider aim of Cypriot education that refers to the preparation of fulfilled (whole) and active citizens (Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus, in press).

Importantly, the aim of 'explicit orientation to the idea of our Greek identity and our Orthodox Christian tradition' that is present in the general aim of the Greek-Cypriot educational system is not explicitly stated in the aim of history teaching in secondary education. It could be argued that this omission in fact reveals an underlying tension between the explicit aim of the development of historical thinking and the implicit aim of orientation to Greek identity and Orthodox Christian tradition. Taking into account the fact that the spiral distribution of the content matter of history teaching across the elementary and the high-school and that the ethnocentric and monoperspectival ideology that supports this teaching is the same both in elementary and high-school it could reasonably be asserted that the actual practice of history teaching undermines the aim of preparing fulfilled and active citizens and the aim of the development of historical thinking. Christou (2004) shows that recent history and especially the internal conflict that preceded 1974 is rarely if ever included in history lessons. Pupils, in her research, argued that they had almost finished high school without being exposed to any explanation about the events that have taken place in their country in the last fifty years.

Bringing the perspective of the 'other' into the purview of school history as taught across the divide of Cyprus is of course only the minimum requirement for the beginning of a more decentred historical narrative. History teaching should encompass much more than the 'shock effect' of finding out that members of 'our' community were also the perpetrators and not always the victims. If history teaching is exhausted in such discussions, then the approach is superficial and runs the danger of falling into the naïve relativist position, described earlier. A more comprehensive approach to history teaching should aim to enhance multiperspectivity both as a teaching approach and an epistemological standpoint.

Multiperspectivity adds an extra dimension to historical narrative by supplementing the linear process with a sequence of 'meanwhiles' which convey the reactions and subsequent actions of 'significant others' (Stradling, 2003, p 19). Multiperspectivity, applied in the Cyprus context highlights the mutual influences

between different groups within Cyprus, neighbouring countries, alliances, rivalries, the colonisers and the colonised or the occupiers and the occupied. Moreover, it sheds more light on conflict situations on the divided island of Cyprus by helping us to understand that they often arise, persist and are shaped by conflicts of interpretation where each party to the dispute assigns motives and intentions to each other's actions which are not founded on any specific evidence, but reflect long-established assumptions, preconceptions, prejudices and stereotypes. Finally, it can demonstrate that in some situations in the histories of Cyprus, the perspectives are related in a symbiotic way, with emphasis placed on historical relationships between more and less powerful groups, between different minority groups, between powerful countries and their less powerful neighbours, allies and satellites.

Unfortunately the ethnocentric grand narratives offered in the Greek-Cypriot history textbooks do not even fulfil the minimum requirements of decentration. A convincing analysis of these ideological orientations may be identified in all textbooks produced in Cyprus, where the history of the island is presented as part of Greek national history and terms such as 'Greek' and 'Cypriot' are used interchangeably or synonymously (Hadjipavlou, 2002; Kizilyürek, 2002; Koullapis, 2002; Lewis and Hodge, 1978). An unbroken, Hellenic continuity is constructed from the twelfth century BCE until the present day with the multiethnic structure of the population being systematically ignored (Kizilyürek, 2002). Nevertheless, as we argued from the beginning of this article, the development of attitudes and stereotypes against the other is the product of a variety of constraints at different levels of analysis (cf Trimikliniotis, 2004). Consequently, analysis of the content of textbooks¹⁰, though a useful research tool and process for the unravelling of dominant discourses, should not be equated with investigation of mechanisms that create and produce hostile attitudes towards the other. Such (re)-production is an ongoing procedure that constitutes a complex process, where communication in the everyday educational praxis provides a much more proximal context for the workings of ideology. The study of education as a process of communication and influence between various agents, most importantly educators, parents and children can unravel the way that epistemologies based on intolerance are enacted in the everyday educational praxis.

The brief overview of the dominant ideological orientations in the last century should have made clear that history teaching in Cyprus, across the existing divide, has a long history of being in the service of promoting the nationalist ideology (Canefe, 2002; Koulouri, 2001; Koullapis, 1999, 2002; Philippou, 2004; Kizilyürek 2001, 2002; Makriyianni, 2006; Özgür, 1994; Papadakis, 1998, 2002, 2003; Spyrou, 2000, 2001, 2005) and can more comfortably be described as heritage rather than history. The distinction made by Lowenthal (1998) can furnish as a lense through

which some paradoxes in relation to the aims of history teaching in the Greek-Cypriot system can be made visible.

Paradoxes of Teaching History in Greek-Cypriot Schools

Greek-Cypriot history curricula, in both primary and secondary education, advocate the promotion of critical thinking, autonomy, the development of the child's cognitive and moral development and humanistic values of respect for the other human being. Our argument so far should have made clear that the promotion of these aims is incompatible with the promotion of a monolithic and monoperspectival nationalist ideology.

The promotion, moreover, of progressive epistemologies, aims and advanced teaching methodologies in Cyprus is seriously undermined by authoritarian forms of asymmetric communicative forms in the educational praxis. For example, in a long-term project which compared primary school pupil-teachers' theories on teaching with their actual practice, Koutselini and Persianis (2000) found that although pupil-teachers' educational standpoints changed in their final year of study towards a child-centred and constructivist view, this was not implemented in their actual teaching. Koutselini and Persianis (p. 516) argue that these misconceptions were 'likely the result of deeply embedded cultural values through which pupil-teachers' understanding of the new pedagogical approaches is mediated'. These authors maintain that misconceptions about the teacher as the only source of knowledge and sole possessor of formal truth can be seen to relate back to the archetype of the priest-teacher, a practice of the past. In addition, the conception of error as a kind of sin can be seen to emerge from the Orthodox Church's epistemology about absolute truth, which the priest teacher must transmit to pupils, and which pupils must learn as the only means to secular salvation just as Orthodox religious knowledge is necessary for spiritual salvation. Koutselini and Persianis (2000) identify the negative role that the epistemology of knowledge as dogma and orthodoxy plays in structuring the actual educational praxis, and suppressing critical thinking – what Piaget ([1977] 1995) would term 'social relations of constraint'. However, they fall short of extending their analysis, with the same consistency, to the nationalist ideology as a dogma that suppresses critical thinking.

The Way Forward

In discussing the way forward and how to resolve these paradoxes, we would like to concentrate on three recent developments in the field of history education in Cyprus that can contribute towards reconciliation: the new Turkish-Cypriot history textbooks, the proposal of the Educational Reform Committee and the work of the multi-communal Association for Historical Dialogue and Research.

In 2004 new history textbooks were produced for the Turkish-Cypriot community. The rewriting of history textbooks was saluted by academics and non-governmental organisations in Cyprus and abroad, as a manifestation of a more critical stance against the workings of the nationalist ideology that guided the old textbooks, and as a positive step towards reconciliation (see POST, 2007).

In 2004 the Educational Reform Committee, comprising a group of academics constituted by and working at the request of the Republic of Cyprus produced a manifesto-report for 'educational transformative reform'. In this manifesto, the Committee argued, among other, for ideological re-orientation and restructuring of the educational system since 'the general orientation and ideology' in Cypriot education remain largely based on 'Greek values' and 'knowledge' (Educational Reform Committee, 2004, p. 4). In this report the term Greek-Cypriot-centric is coined for the first time. The Committee calls for a transformation based on the principles of participatory democracy, 'humanist' and 'neo-humanist ideology' and argues for 'objectives such as the intercultural and multicultural ideology that connect Cypriot traditions with knowledge of the culture and civilisation of others' (Educational Reform Committee, 2004). As regards history teaching, it proposes greater emphasis on the teaching of history through educational programmes and textbooks that correspond to European standards (peaceful coexistence, multiculturalism, respect for difference, and the elimination of chauvinism, nationalism and intercommunal hatred). In addition, the proposal highlights the development of pupils' 'addiction'¹¹ and adherence to multiple narratives for Peace Education and Pedagogy of Rapprochement. It promotes joint educational programmes and teacher training seminars in co-operation with Turkish-Cypriot schools, teachers and pupils to develop a European dimension and rapprochement among all communities towards a peaceful and viable solution of the Cyprus problem.

The Educational Reform Committee also identifies mechanistic history teaching as a problem, drawing on secondary teachers' accounts to note that lessons are knowledge-centred and based on rote-learning in order to meet the requirements of the exam-centred system. 'Very little effort is thus put on achieving critical thinking and the development of political, civic and moral virtues and competencies' (Educational Reform Committee, 2004 p. 86). The proposal further suggests the establishment of an impartial, joint committee of academics, consisting of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, for the revision of history textbooks. The established practice of importing history textbooks from Greece is criticised, and local production of textbooks on the history of Cyprus is advocated in accordance with the UNESCO guidelines on history teaching. Any change, however, as the committee points out, presupposes parallel adjustments in training and education, and in-service training of teachers.

The public reaction to the reform proposal was varied. Three main lines of argument characterised the reaction to the manifesto. One school of thought supported its proposals and the need for debate removed from bias and party-politics. A second line of response avoided discussion on ideological issues so as not to sidetrack the realisation of the reform, but instead, offered refined critique and review of particular aspects (cf Psaltis, 2006). A third line of argument heavily criticised the ideological and theoretical standpoints of the manifesto for attacking Greek/Hellenic-Orthodox ideals. In the words of a Greek-Cypriot philologist: 'a national heritage of three thousand years is questioned by pseudo-arguments for intercultural and multicultural ideology' (Hadjikonstantas, 2005). The Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Greek-Orthodox Church of Cyprus regretted that it had not been consulted in spite of the Church's historic role (Perikleous, 2005), and the members of the Open University of Cyprus dismissed the proposal as an a-theoretical piece of work riddled with contradictions aimed to de-Hellenise Cyprus (Razis, Filokuprou, Orphanides, Giallourides, Tsakmakis, Gravanis, and Pilavakis, 2005). For many of those who opposed the manifesto's ideological orientation, no educational reform should be proposed especially regarding history teaching, without taking into consideration the current stalemate of division, and not before a rightful solution for all Cypriots is found, one that would guarantee restoration of human rights, safety issues, withdrawal of Turkish troops and settlers. The arguments developed in this paper suggest that the aforementioned reactions concerning the proposed ideological reorientation are, to a large extent, unfounded. Education has an important role to play in preparing critical, active, tolerant and democratic citizens. The educational reform committee has made vital suggestions as to how this preparation should, as soon as possible, go ahead in order to contribute towards breaking the cycle of intractability.

The second major recent development that has been contributing to the promotion of the disciplinary approach in history teaching for the last three years is the work of the multi-communal Association for Historical Dialogue and Research.¹² In April 2003, the multicommunal, non-governmental association was founded in Cyprus with a mission to promote productive dialogue and research on issues of history and history teaching to strengthen peace, stability, democracy and critical thinking.¹³ The Association, whose Board and members comprise researchers, historians and educators from primary, secondary and higher education, across the existing divide, recognises the values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights, the covenants of Human Rights issued by the United Nations, and the UNESCO recommendations relevant to history teaching. In particular, the Association aims to: enhance quality in learning and teaching of history, emphasising the advancement of historical thinking; encourage communication and co-operation between individuals and organisations interested in history, history teaching and learning locally and internationally; ensure access

and equal learning opportunities to individuals of every ability, ethnic and cultural background; provide a forum for the discussion of matters of common interest for individuals concerned with history and history teaching and learning; and promote understanding, respect and co-operation amongst the ethnic groups of Cyprus.

The Association has set as one of its priorities the teacher training on the epistemology and methodology of history teaching. Many multicomunal educational discussions have been organised in collaboration with civil society and teacher trade unions across the divide in Cyprus, and organisations and institutions abroad. A series of collaborative multicomunal seminars and workshops with the Council of Europe – the first one held in June 2004 entitled ‘The Council of Europe and History Education’ – on the social and cultural history of Cyprus with trainers from various countries of Europe and across the divide in Cyprus – have set the pace for further cooperation at a local, European and international level (cf Philippou and Makriyianni, 2004; Loizos, 2003; Council of Europe, 2004, Council of Europe and Makriyianni, 2005).

Concluding Remarks

In this article, we showed that, in the Greek-Cypriot educational system, the helleno-christian ideal has been the dominant ideology for many years. At the core of this ideology there was, and still is, a dialectic of intolerance that ignores the point of view of other ethnic or religious groups and promotes a form of blind patriotism that interprets any criticism of the own-group as a form of betrayal. Moreover, a majoritarianism, premised on the same dialectic of intolerance, dictates that Greek Cypriots should have the first and last word on the governance of Cyprus. Following Lowenthal’s (1998) distinction between heritage and history, school history as taught today in Greek-Cypriot schools acts as a weapon in the hands of nationalist ideology – historical sources that contradict the official Greek-Cypriot narrative are suppressed and the Cyprus problem is presented only as a matter of invasion and occupation by Turkey ignoring the history of inter-communal strife and the current lack of trust between the two larger communities of Cyprus (see research of UNFICYP, 2007). Such a practice bears stark similarities with history being taught as heritage. As such the teaching of history promotes a monological approach to history teaching that is sustained by asymmetric forms of communication where beliefs are transmitted from the more powerful to the less powerful, from the group to the individual. Pupils conform to and reproduce the narrative of the collective memory of Greek Cypriots. This attachment to one’s nation and absence of references to the ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity of populations, accompanied by a silence concerning social stratification, has a negative impact on the cultivation of democratic citizens. In the name of patriotism, national unity and conformity, debate, critique and plurality of

perspectives are perceived as threats and are pushed aside. Emotionally charged narratives filled with dates and 'facts' of heroic moments presented as the outcome of uncompromising valour in resisting any reconciliation with 'the enemies' further undermine the desire for peace. Members of the 'national' group are encouraged to be firmly loyal, intolerant of in-group criticism, and to praise unquestioningly the in-group's decisions and actions.

Most school experience is permeated and constrained by a static, 'traditional' epistemology of history teaching that is based on Piagetian ([1932] 1965) social relations of constraint. In some cases such an epistemology is actively promoted and even celebrated through all narratives explored at school, which commemorate the continuity, homogeneity, antiquity and heroic nature of Cypriot Hellenism. In other cases, the same beliefs are transmitted to children through visits to museums (Makriyianni, 2006) where the emphasis is placed on how children can best 'master' 'their heritage'. The teaching of history as heritage is a paradox indeed in a country that claims it wants to find a mutually agreed solution, based on the UN resolutions through dialogue and peaceful means. How could reconciliation, rapprochement and co-operation flourish between the two larger communities in Cyprus when the teaching of history undermines this effort? How can educators help cultivate active and critical citizens, develop their agency and autonomy, their intelligence and morality when they suppress through social relations of constraint true dialogue on sensitive issues in history teaching?

Education needs to urgently become a space of free dialogue, contact and co-operation between members of various ethnic groups across the divide. The emergence of this dialectic of co-operation implies mutual respect, a norm of reciprocity and decentration from our sociocentrism that will help in overcoming the constraints and democratic deficits and also promote the strengthening of civil society. The educational praxis is a sphere where communication between pupils and their teachers and peers takes place. Policy makers and educators alike need to promote communicative rationality as free, unconstrained from coercive forces, symmetric dialogue (Habermas, [1983] 1990) in the classrooms so as to avoid the colonisation of history teaching by the ethnocentric and 'traditional' framework of 'orthodoxy' that penetrates the Greek-Cypriot educational system. A necessary prerequisite would be to make available both the Greek-Cypriot and the Turkish-Cypriot perspectives in the classrooms, either physically through contact with Turkish Cypriots or symbolically through prepared lessons that aim at decentring children from their own ethnocentrism. More importantly, teachers should aim to further the advancement of historical understanding of their pupils, like examination and evaluation of primary and secondary sources, contextualisation and multiperspectivity.

When teaching history children should be urged to seek and identify the 'absences and silences' of 'others', put themselves in the shoes of 'others' during their history lessons, and try to imagine what it would have been like to be them. They would be challenged to question accounts and interrogate evidence, not to take things at face value, but always to research and to construct their own interpretations through disciplined argument and debate. Pupils can, in this way, become aware that the stereotypes and prejudices that have governed their judgments about 'the other' are both counterproductive and dangerous, and may recognise the need for productive alternatives. To nurture and sustain these attitudes, such activities should be part of a broader drive towards critical history, historiography and history teaching.

This conceptualisation is in accordance with UNESCO's insistence that education, in particular history teaching, can be an excellent vehicle of mutual understanding, especially between neighbouring countries. For UNESCO new approaches to history teaching as well as comparative reviews of curricula and textbooks are important resources for the development of civil society, good neighbourliness and the construction of a culture of peace. Along these lines, Council of Europe Recommendation 15 (2001), points out that history teaching in a democratic Europe should be 'a decisive factor in reconciliation, recognition, understanding and mutual trust' and 'play a vital role in the promotion of fundamental values, such as tolerance, mutual understanding, human rights and democracy'. History teaching should also aim to develop in pupils 'the intellectual ability to analyse and interpret information critically and responsibly, through dialogue' and 'through open debate based on multiperspectivity, especially on controversial and sensitive issues' (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 2). Moreover, 'history teaching must not be an instrument of ideological manipulation, or propaganda'.

There is the need today to initiate a debate on 'ongoing issues concerning the legacy of the past' and the role of nationalisms in Cyprus and a meta-interpretive approach to exploring, touching upon and commenting on ambiguity and myth, revealing discrepancies and biases. Such a task could be taken upon by civil society and/or an independent reconciliation commission. Moreover, great emphasis should be placed on cooperative work in the educational system (see Psaltis and Duveen, 2006, 2007) and policies of inter-group contact in integrated schools based on the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954). These approaches can promote a paradigm shift from a dialectic of intolerance to a dialectic of co-operation.

Notes

1. Given divides the period from the British occupation of Cyprus in 1878 to Independence in 1960 into three phases: Orientalist (1878-c.1900), Philhellenic (c.1900-c.1930), and 'Authentic Cypriot' (c.1930-1960).
2. In Greek: *να αφελληνιστεί*.
3. Prominent nationalist educator and headmaster of the Pancyprian Gymnasium for many years, who following the Independence of Cyprus was elected President of the Greek Communal Chamber in Cyprus, a body which dealt with matters of religion, education and culture. On 1 April 1965, after the inter-communal strife and the withdrawal of Turkish Cypriots from all governmental posts, Spyridakis was appointed by Greek Cypriots as the first Minister of Education of the Republic of Cyprus, a position he held until 1970.
4. EOKA (In Greek: Εθνική Οργάνωση Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών, in English: National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters).
5. TMT (In Turkish: Türk Mukavemet Teşkilati, in English: Turkish Resistance Organisation).
6. The educational reform of 1976 was initiated by the then Minister of Education, Dr C. Sofianos, a young professional educationist.
7. The new Minister of Education, N. Konomis, was a classicist philologist who had held a position at the University of Thessalonica, Greece.
8. According to Papanastasiou and Koutselini (1999) some have described it as nationalistic and contrary to the efforts of Cyprus to adjust to the principles and the policies of the European Union, to which the Republic of Cyprus had applied for full EU membership in 1990. AKEL, described this policy as chauvinistic and one that created difficulties in the attempt to solve the Cyprus problem within the framework of the United Nations' resolutions. On the other hand, many scholars in the field of education claimed that the pursuit of national objectives on the part of the educational system is not opposed to the European Union Treaty (Maastricht) and that this pursuit is a common phenomenon in many countries that belong to the European Union.
9. Its main form since 1974 has been to defend the political independence of Cyprus, whilst advocating close cultural links with Greece.
10. For an analysis of the new history textbooks produced in and for the Turkish-Cypriot community, see POST (2007)
11. 'Addiction' is the translation of the word 'εθισμός', used by authors.
12. For information on the Association for Historical Dialogue and Research see: website of the AHDR [<http://www.hisdialresearch.org/>].
13. The birth of the Association, on 21 April 2003, almost coincided with a historic change that took place on the island when on 23 April 2003, travel restrictions between the two sides of the Green Line in Cyprus were unexpectedly eased and several thousand Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots had their first chance since 1974 to cross the divide.

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DOES CYPRUS NEED A TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION?

Erol Kaymak

Abstract

One of the unexplored questions in Cyprus relates to the means of reconciliation, prior to or in conjunction with a political settlement to the Cyprus problem. Now that bodies of the missing persons in Cyprus are finally being exhumed and identified through DNA testing, it is reasonable to ask whether there is a need to consider the establishment of bodies authorised to seek both truth and reconciliation.

The short answer is 'no'. The Reconciliation Commission that was envisaged in the failed Annan Plan would serve the end of reconciliation better than a full blown truth and reconciliation commission. The paper explores the matter and potential problems, offering some suggestions for a more fruitful future Reconciliation Commission that goes beyond the confines of the original mandate (as described in the Annan Plan) to write an official historical text to embrace the wider challenge of contributing to the construction and maintenance of a viable society and polity. Further, now that a settlement on the island is less imminent given the rejection of the Annan Plan, there is also a need to consider pursuing reconciliation independent of a comprehensive settlement.

Introduction

Although there are many victims of inter (and intra) ethnic violence, including individuals missing since the events of 1974, official and public demand for 'truth' regarding the fate of such persons has been limited. Partly as a result, the UN blueprint to reunite Cyprus in time for European Union accession, the Annan Plan, bifurcated the function of ascertaining 'truth' regarding the fate of the missing, on the one hand, and reconciliation, on the other. Given the failure of the Annan Plan it is now possible to reflect on alternatives. Moreover, now that bodies of the missing persons are finally being exhumed, identified through DNA testing, and returned to families it is reasonable to ask whether there is a need to consider the establishment of bodies authorised to seek both truth and reconciliation. In other words, does Cyprus need a Truth and Reconciliation Commission a la South Africa?

Indeed, is there a need for 'truth' in Cyprus regarding past acts? Would this aid in the process of reconciliation in Cyprus, whether prior to or as part of a political settlement? The question is more relevant today given the failure of the UN to reunite Cyprus in time for EU accession in 2004. The UN blueprint known as the Annan Plan that failed in 2004 had envisioned the establishment of a Reconciliation Commission, but did not have the authority to ascertain facts regarding victims of inter and intra-ethnic violence. Ultimately the bias of the Annan Plan was in favour of intercommunal reconciliation in lieu of restitutive justice that may be possible for individuals through an accounting of past acts.

Our primary reference to this question is the South African experience, where in the aftermath of the apartheid regime a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established through the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act signed by President Nelson Mandela in May 1995. Its mandate was to foster reconciliation through the dissemination of 'truth', be it factual or emotional in nature, culminating in a five volume Final Report including recommendations for reparations to victims. The TRC offered amnesty to individuals providing full disclosure of all relevant facts, thus immunity from prosecution in South African civil or criminal courts. In this way, the TRC created a linkage between amnesty granting and truth telling.

In Cyprus, by contrast, the Annan Plan, a UN blueprint to reunite Cyprus in time for EU accession, provided for a more limited institution. The envisioned Reconciliation Commission (RC) was to be mandated with the promotion of "understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots".¹ In particular the RC would have worked on a "report regarding the history of the Cyprus problem as experienced and interpreted by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots".² Based on the report specific recommendations would be made to both federal and constituent government authorities to incorporate new guidelines for school textbooks on history.

In short, in the case of the United Cyprus Republic there would not have been any subpoenas of alleged criminals with respect to their role in inter or intra-ethnic human right violations and other activities. The Annan Plan made clear that "[t]he Commission shall have no prosecutorial or other criminal legal function or powers".³

Truth regarding the fate of the approximately 2000 'missing' persons in Cyprus would have been ascertained independent of the RC,⁴ through the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus, whereby work would be conducted through constituent state authorities.⁵ The powers of the RC would be rather limited to "requesting" participation of individuals under oath. To a great extent, expediency dictates the dual nature of ascertaining facts, especially those that pertain to the fate of the

missing persons, on the one hand, and the building of societal trust and reconciliation, on the other. Whereas the political impasse continues, efforts to locate suspected sites of burial of victims of inter (as well as intra) communal murder have been continuing for many years. In fact, since the failed referenda of 2004, the Committee for Missing Persons has been more active in locating and determining identities of missing persons.

Limits on the Reconciliation Commission's envisioned agenda did not preclude, however, the examination of acts by authorities – either of the internationally recognised government of the Republic of Cyprus or the unrecognised 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus' – deemed "inconsistent with or repugnant to any other provision of [the Annan Plan] or international law".⁶ However, liability was circumscribed and liability or compensation claims would have to be dealt with by the constituent state from which the claimant hails. Generally, though, the plan suggested a blanket exoneration of individuals who may have or will be alleged to have partaken in criminal activity.

As is widely known, the Cyprus problem remains unresolved, as the Annan Plan was rejected by a significant majority of the Greek-Cypriot community.⁷ As a result the Republic of Cyprus acceded to the European Union as a divided state. Whereas the European Union would have preferred a united island upon accession, the suboptimal outcome was accommodated through Protocol 10 to the Accession Treaty, which stipulates that the *acquis communautaire* of the European Union remains suspended north of the Green Line pending a political settlement (or, short of this, parts thereof may be implemented with the unanimous consent of EU members in the interim).

As the Annan Plan was a package the United Cyprus Republic and its particular elements were also rejected in the referendum. In this way the Reconciliation Commission was also shelved. However, the fundamental need for reconciliation in Cyprus remains, and to that end the proposed Reconciliation Commission and its attributes still deserve consideration as a model.

An analysis of the proposed Reconciliation Commission reveals that the intent was to deal with a societal or inter-communal need for reconciliation rather than individual needs for truth on the fate of the missing or for restitutive (as opposed to retributive) justice. The question that the communities in Cyprus are faced with is whether there is an ultimate need to go further than this and approximate, presumably, the South African model, if not retributive justice models.

My short answer to this complex and – in some ways – vexing problem is 'no'. The specific circumstances of South Africa (and other countries where similar

approaches have been employed) differ from that of Cyprus in several ways. In this paper I will examine those peculiar circumstances and argue that RC as was envisioned in the Annan Plan was probably more appropriate to reconciliation in Cyprus. At the same time, I will point out some potential weaknesses of the Annan Plan RC that might have been addressed through a more robust TRC type commission.

The Case for TRC

It bears noting that TRC itself is a compromise method of dealing with human rights violations which may otherwise be dealt with through ad hoc or permanent war crimes tribunals. It is, in fact, one of various possible models to be employed in post-conflict societies. Whether through criminal trials or historical commissions, the general thrust behind all forms of 'truth-telling' and 'truth-seeking' methods are various assumptions regarding the role of 'truth' in ensuring or consolidating subsequent peace in previously war-torn societies. Formal truth-telling mechanisms are considered to be crucial in discrediting chauvinist 'myth-making' that apparently contributes to civil strife. Researchers associated with numerous organisations, including the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)⁸ and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS),⁹ consider truth-telling to be an important pillar of post-conflict peacebuilding.

As a form of post-conflict justice, TRC shies away from trials and purges (i.e. retributive justice), instead favouring truth-commissions and reparations to victims, and amnesties in return for 'truth' confessions (i.e. non-retributive or restorative justice). As a matter of policy, the question is whether TRC, as opposed to more retributive models, is of greater utility in consolidating peace than alternatives.

In the case of South Africa the price for peace – that is ending what was in essence a civil war – was to provide an avenue for amnesty to agents of the outgoing apartheid regime. By contrast, the wars in former Yugoslavia and elsewhere have culminated in the criminal prosecution of individuals indicted by war crimes tribunals, including, notably, Slobodan Milosevic. Indeed, one of the goals of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) was the uncovering of truth.

The victims of crimes in South Africa had to settle for an account of their suffering (not to mention reparations, of course) rather than retributive justice. Yet, truth in and of itself may be of significant value to the process of reconciliation. It is this very virtue of TRC that makes it an attractive alternative to war crimes tribunals and thus the evasive tactics of the accused.

The cynical proverb that what one does not know cannot hurt them is generally specious. There are no 'white lies' when it comes to atrocities and violations of human rights. The full disclosure of relevant facts reveals what had been shrouded in secrecy. It might be argued that the South African TRC had the benefit of encouraging perpetrators of crimes to come forward with details on their particular misdeeds, which in turn helped explode myths that are necessarily sustained through concealment.

Proponents of 'truth-telling' have touted the virtues of South African style TRC.¹⁰ The benefits of 'truth-telling' are said to be therapeutic,¹¹ and in emphasising individual over collective guilt, promotion of social reconciliation.¹² Further, through the publication of an agreeable historical accounting of the past, truth-telling may delimit the acceptable public discourses that contribute to polarising 'myth-making',¹³ among others.

In applying this to the case of Cyprus, it is conceivable, for instance, that greater light would be shed on the fate of the missing persons should the threat of litigation be used to coerce the revelation of such information.

The Case against TRC in Cyprus

The case for 'truth-telling' as a panacea to transitional, post-conflict societies, however, is debatable.¹⁴ The empirical evidence supporting the utility of 'truth' may be limited and anecdotal.¹⁵ This in turn raises the empirical question as to whether reconciliation actually requires 'truth'.

This paper cannot hope to contribute to this broader debate on the utility of 'truth-telling' more generally. However, the debate does relate to how 'truth' is interpreted in the case of Cyprus. The discussion below makes the case that TRC is probably inappropriate for Cyprus. Reconciliation, it is suggested, is not a process of objective fact revealing (i.e. truth-telling), but of social construction of identities, which is a form of myth-making in itself. Sometimes this entails a reinterpretation of history, as has been the case in post Franco Spain where the civil war came to be treated as a "tragedy", thus attribution for past acts was laid at the feet of a wider context of societal and international forces, as opposed to persons and groups.¹⁶

Facts do not speak for themselves. They are interpreted within a particular social context. Agents of social reproduction are mandated – officially or even through their own volition – with the task of creating and maintaining myths that sustain society. In the case of Cyprus, the official representations of the 'Cyprus problem' have no doubt contributed to the problem itself. In circumstances where political values are contested the 'truth' is quite subjective. Anyone familiar with

contemporary epistemological debate is aware that 'truth' and 'facts' are subject to contestation, especially in the social realm. The situation in Cyprus is such that the past is interpreted through distinct lenses, and the task of the RC must be to reconcile these often mutually exclusive visions.

It might be argued that to further this end a TRC, as opposed to the RC stipulated in the Annan Plan, might be more effective. However, given the ambiguity of the Annan Plan itself, there would be practical difficulties in ascertaining 'facts'. The adage that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter could not be more apt under the circumstances. Much unlike South Africa – where the apartheid regime came to be widely vilified and treated as the antithesis of democracy, and presumably the ethos of the new South Africa – in Cyprus two regimes, hence two competing theses, have to be reconciled.

The case of Cyprus differs from South Africa and other cases of interethnic warring in various ways. These particularities make the RC envisioned in the Annan Plan more appropriate than the TRC employed in South Africa.

Ambiguity in the 'New State of Affairs'

The most significant difference stems from the ontology of the 'new state of affairs' that would have been the United Cyprus Republic as proposed by the Annan Plan. The final stage negotiations on the plan that began anew in February 2004 demonstrated that the sides still contested significant aspects of the Annan Plan that they supposedly accepted to submit to simultaneous referenda unprovisionally in April 2004. The sides seemed to believe that the plan could be interpreted in substantially different ways.

Much of this emanated from the ambiguity in the establishment of the 'new state of affairs', which was itself a diplomatic means of avoiding the problem of state succession (i.e. how we got to the 'new state of affairs') to which both sides are highly sensitive. The UN considered this a "virgin birth" (a form of 'constructive ambiguity'), but with such indistinctness there is a need for constructive thinking on how to articulate and promote the United Cyprus Republic through various institutions, such as media and education.

Thus, in many ways the Annan Plan remained especially unpopular in the South of Cyprus, where few politicians risked much political capital in promoting it. Within the Greek Cypriot community the plan, with its various derogations from the EU *acquis communautaire* was depicted as a form of apartheid in and of itself. Thus, if Greek Cypriots were to come to accept the plan as a basis for a reunited island they would have had to accept the various compromises entailed in the plan.

The Turkish-Cypriot community, more internally divided than the Greek-Cypriot community overall, nevertheless sought the fulfilment of 'political equality', the debating point within the community being whether or not the plan actually satisfied this and other needs. In accepting the plan as the basis of a reunified island – as verified by the positive outcome in the referendum held in the north of Cyprus on 24 April 2004 – the community did so with the understanding that its 'state' and 'sovereignty' was not superseded by the 'new state of affairs'.

In this way neither side has dealt empathetically with the others needs and concerns regarding the future in a reunified island, or not reunified as the case may be. Depending on one's view the 'new state of affairs' would have had the effect of nullifying the Republic of Cyprus, or of negating the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus'. Indeed, these were the respective views of the chief negotiators of either side, respectively.

Historical Narratives

Similarly the historical understandings (or historiographies) of the complex history that unfolded on the island are presented through essentialist representations of the 'other' without pause for critical thought. Thus, the agents of either regime, that is the EOKA and TMT organisations, are treated as heroes or villains by the communities, respectively. This tends to hold for the majority in either community, in spite of a small but significant movement of civil society associations determined to overcome the essentialist representations that are pervasive.

In these ways the envisioned United Cyprus Republic did not provide a clear view of the past. In South Africa the interpretation of the past was clear, yet the details of the regime, its procedures, and specific violations of human rights attributed to it were shrouded in secrecy. Apartheid was evil and its perpetrators and their deeds had to be exposed. In South Africa there were more clearly designated social roles of aggressor and victim.

In Cyprus the past is opaque and in need of interpretation. At the societal or inter-communal level, all sides conceive of themselves of victims of aggression. Neither side has acknowledged its role in contributing to what is known as the 'Cyprus problem'.

In Cyprus, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots have emphasised their "freedom defined ethnically".¹⁷ The ethnic narratives, in turn, make truth very difficult to negotiate. Primordialist historiographies especially in the case of Greek Cypriots (with Turks as eternal enemies), proved difficult to reconcile with lived experience of sharing villages and space with Turkish Cypriots. Ultimately, the goal of enosis (union with motherland Greece) was one and the same as freedom, but freedom in

Cyprus would come at the expense of the other. The division of Cyprus, thus, tends to be perceived as a serious injustice, and resistance to the Annan Plan, as personified by President Tassos Papadopoulos, came to signify the 'dignity' of the Greek-Cypriot people.¹⁸

This is not to say that historiographies are homogeneous within communities. Particularly in the Greek-Cypriot community, narratives and participation in commemorations serves to divide left (i.e. AKEL) and right (DISY), with the interpretation of 1974 being quite distinct, with AKEL's emphasis on the 'treachery' that led to the coup of 15 July, and DISI focusing on the Turkish invasion days later.¹⁹ Whereas Turkish-Cypriot commemorations tend to be superficially more homogeneous, the left (i.e. CTP) are much less interested in commemorating the past than the right (i.e. UBP).

With respect to attribution, Cypriots of the left, Greek and Turkish, have much in common in pointing to the culpability of nationalists and unwanted 'motherlands' in the division of the island. Ultimately, though, the Greek Cypriots are unified in their narrative that views that end as a sad division of the island, and whereas Turkish Cypriots are less united on the end, differences are nuanced.

Returning to the issue of the missing persons, it is plausible to argue that revelation of truth would suggest that various versions of history prove to be erroneous or omitted, however, it is unlikely that these facts would help anyone adjudicate between the contending perspectives on sovereignty.

Problems with Reparations

On an individual basis, along the lines of procedure followed by the South African TRC through its Human Rights Violation Committee, the challenge of assessing the claims and counterclaims (of what would clearly be sides) would be taxing and might aggravate rather than alleviate interethnic tensions, especially if such claims entailed reparations. The question as to who (i.e. which community) suffered 'more' would become problematic. In fact, as can be seen from the negotiations, the chronology of the Cyprus dispute comes into play often, with the Turkish side claiming that the events of 1963 through 1974 had such a detrimental affect on the Turkish-Cypriot community and its economic welfare that any assessment of property values and other matters pertaining to restitution of human rights must take these facts into consideration.

Related to this is the problem with the TRC in general, and thus for Cyprus, of the cost of its implementation. Whereas the South African TRC Final Report recommended billions of South African Rands to be paid out in reparation to victims of apartheid the government dragged its feet when it came time to provide compensation. In Cyprus the cost of reconstructing in the United Cyprus Republic

was considered dear enough. Even the more rosy forecasts²⁰ predicted that costs for new housing and infrastructure would run into billions of dollars. Saddling the new federal government with more debt would be a great strain on the economy.

As the RC stood in the Annan Plan funding for the RC would not be problematic, and the UN even envisioned contributions emanating from the guarantor powers and international donors.

The Lack of the Immediacy Factor

Another way in which Cyprus differs is that the specific events of relevance are often decades old, notwithstanding the 'continuing violation' of human rights as pertains to the rights of individuals to property and freedom of movement as ascertained by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) as violations of specified articles of the European Convention on Human Rights.²¹ With respect to property rights, many hundreds of cases remaining pending with the ECHR, as Turkey seeks to establish a local court in the 'TRNC' to serve as a domestic remedy. Meanwhile, isolated events, including the deaths of two Greek Cypriots who crossed into the buffer zone in the mid 1990s are exceptional cases. In short, Cyprus is a 'frozen' conflict. The lack of contact and intimacy from 1974 through 2003 confined the conflict to the corridors of diplomacy and to courts.

If there is a case for 'immediacy' it would relate to the opening of crossings since 2003. Many Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots took advantage of the crossings, for varying reasons. For instance, in the case of the Turkish-Cypriot community, one impulse is economic, with hundreds of daily wage earners crossing south to work on construction sites. Other middle class Turkish Cypriots, meanwhile, have been enrolling their children in primary and secondary educational institutions, including the English School, founded in 1900 by the then British colonial administration.

However, crossings in and of themselves have not served to reconcile the communities. If anything, the crossings may even have had an adverse impact on inter-societal trust. A poll conducted by the UN in Cyprus suggests that as a result of crossings many persons now have a more negative view of persons from the other community.²² This is especially true of Greek Cypriots who report to have only crossed one or a few times, so a straightforward interpretation may not be valid. However, the paucity of crossings and the negativity associated with limited crossings itself supports the view that the immediate cause for concern is how recent developments contribute to mistrust.

Events in late 2006 where a group of Greek-Cypriot youths entered the campus and attacked some of the Turkish-Cypriot students, stemming from tensions related

to an event reported in the Greek-Cypriot press, can either be treated as 'isolated' or as part of a larger societal problem to be addressed in a broader context.

The phenomenon may relate to real frustration with the continuing Cyprus problem impasse, as well as resentment at the communal level directed at organisations or groups associated with the 'other side'. This public frustration is exacerbated by the lack of official level progress in either the substantive elements of the Cyprus problem, as well as failure to implement confidence building measures.

Frustration among Greek Cypriots may relate to 'facts on the ground', including the continuing presence of thousands of troops from Turkey, as well as the continuing flow of persons from Turkey into the north of Cyprus. Moreover, a building boom in the north, often on Greek-Cypriot properties, also contributes to frustration.

Frustration among Turkish Cypriots may relate to an expectations gap following the community's approval of the Annan Plan. This frustration emanates not only from intercommunal mistrust, but is also due to the fact that European Union promises to "lift the isolations" on the Turkish-Cypriot community have either stalled or not manifested in line with expectations.

Tensions between the respective leaderships have often degenerated in what UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Ibrahim Gambari referred to as "the blame game", serving to erode trust further. Efforts at apparently benign confidence building, including – notably – efforts to open the Ledra Street to pedestrian crossings, have broken down in acrimony and recriminations.

Polling data since the referenda of 2004 suggest that intercommunal relations are increasingly strained, with large numbers of individuals preferring not to live with members of the other community as neighbours. Specific evidence of declining levels of intercommunal trust can be gleaned from survey results, including a survey conducted by the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation in 2006 that revealed that the vast majority of young Greek Cypriots (under the age of 35) were opposed to living together with Turkish Cypriots, thus throwing into question the viability of 'reunification' of the island as a realisable political project.²³ Similar, but more nuanced, results can be gleaned from the UN poll.²⁴

Remarkably, coinciding with the negative developments, the effort of the Committee of Missing Persons (CMP) to locate and exhume bodies of missing persons has been moving along with greater vigour than at any previous period in the Cyprus dispute. By April 2007 the CMP hopes to begin returning remains to

affected families. The CMP has much work to conclude, but only a fraction of the 2000 plus missing persons have been located thus far. Moreover, without a formal process of reconciliation, it is unlikely that the circumstances under which the victims were killed can be addressed.

Of course, there may be potential demand for 'truth'. The UN poll suggests that majorities in either community support the exhumations and identification of missing persons, although the questionnaire does not explicitly ask whether respondents would be interested in a more elaborate criminal inquiry.²⁵

All of this suggests the wisdom of pursuing some form of societal reconciliation project to restore trust. The question is whether 'truth' is necessary for reconciliation. It may be argued that what is required is a full accounting of the past, since "amnesia is the enemy of reconciliation".²⁶ However, since as I have argued, 'facts' do not speak for themselves, the problem is not amnesia but interpretation. Perhaps the term 'omission' would be more useful in this context, since the respective communities may very much be in denial regarding culpability for specific atrocities. That is, it is not a mutually exclusive relationship. Truth, to the extent that it actually contributes to inter-group harmony and cooperation, beyond non-lethal coexistence, may be useful.

In South Africa and Rwanda, as well as in other parts of Africa the conflicts and the wounds were relatively new. The same is true of the former Yugoslavia. In Cyprus the old wounds fester at the behest of ethno-nationalism, hence sustaining it through cultural reproduction. The kind of inquiries pursued in South Africa would undoubtedly stir passions based not on knowledge but prejudice. Whereas living memory may bear testimony to facts, and various perpetrators would still be alive and accountable some thirty to forty or more years on, the facts are no longer as fresh or certain as they might be. For sure, the facts related to acts committed in South Africa in the 1960s might also be of less resonance, but there the conflict itself, hence violence, persisted through the 1990s. The need for accountability would be of greater urgency whereas in Cyprus the needs are somewhat different.

Therefore the Annan Plan and the RC were based on the premise that in Cyprus there will emerge – it must be hoped – a new generation of Cypriots unburdened by history and not directly involved in the conflicts of the past. Therefore, the individuals who otherwise would be subject to criminal proceedings are exonerated of their misdeeds.

No doubt this is partly done for purposes of political expediency. It would be very difficult to get the sides to endorse a plan that might lead to the conviction of individuals who may in certain circumstances continue to hold high office in either

community. The practical problem here is that while the ranks of the generation of TMT and EOKA paramilitary are thinning, there are still enough of them enjoying privileged status. New recruits to such associations and their offshoots sustain political support and make an in-depth inquiry politically problematic. In South Africa, by contrast, the surrender of the former apartheid regime to accountability was relatively complete.

The Reconciliation Commission in the Annan Plan

The details of how the RC would have been organised and its specific procedures would have emerged in the course of technical negotiation, if ever. As envisioned, the RC would have been an independent and impartial body, and federal and constituent state authorities would have been obliged to cooperate with it.²⁷ As opposed to singling out individuals as culprits and dwelling on specific cases of violations of human rights, the RC would have been mandated with the promotion of “understanding, tolerance and mutual respect”. Discussions of history would be on an intercommunal level of “dispassionate” discourse with a view to reconciliation and a “comprehensive report on the history of the Cyprus Problem as experienced and interpreted by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots”.²⁸ Clearly then, the goal would not have been to ascertain ‘facts’ as such, but to construct an historical account based on subjective experience and empathy. The resulting report would then be the basis of recommendations for policy to promote reconciliation.

The goal of the RC would not include discrediting or ‘blowing up’ of any myths. Indeed, the RC would have assumed responsibility for the safeguarding of monuments and memorial sites in areas subject to territorial adjustment that may be deemed offensive to members of the other community. For instance, Greek Cypriots are made symbolically aware of the division of the island on a daily basis when they direct their gaze toward the Kyrenia mountain range where reputedly the largest flag on earth has been painted on the mountainside. It is also lit at night. Nowhere in the Annan Plan was there any suggestion that these sorts of symbols would be removed. In fact, it was plausible that the Turkish-Cypriot State (i.e. the constituent state in the north envisioned in the Annan Plan) would have adopted the existing ‘TRNC’ flag as its symbol.

Procedurally, the various sensitive tasks aimed at reconciliation would have been undertaken by Cypriots themselves with the aid of the United Nations Secretary General, who would appoint all seven members of the RC (three Turkish Cypriots, three Greek Cypriots, and one non-Cypriot).

The RC was designed to promote mutual understanding and reconciliation between the communities on the island rather than to uncover ‘truth’. This paper

has argued that there are good reasons for this and that overall the RC approach is probably better suited to Cyprus than the TRC model applied in South Africa. Nevertheless, there are some areas where the RC may run into practical difficulties in fulfilling its mandate.

Potential Problems

From day one the particular appointments of individuals to be members of the Commission could have sparked some controversy, given the perceived inclinations of such persons and the impact this might have on the final report. This might have made the job of the UN Secretary General more difficult, in that he might have found himself compromising for the sake of political expediency in the form of a more 'representative' body.

This further implies that members of the Commission might have considered themselves vanguards of jealously held versions of 'truth' emanating from within their respective communities. That is, the composition of the RC would have much bearing on the degree to which it functions as a unit with a common purpose or whether it devolved into an arena for competing perspectives on the past that lobby for space in the 'new' historical account. It would have been hoped, therefore, that the selection of such members would be based very much on meritorious criteria.

Beyond the politicisation of the RC membership there could have been the problem of compromise on matters of substance. Specific events might prove too divisive or sensitive for the Commission to deal with in a meaningful way, given its implications for the interpretation of the final report. The need for balance might have led the RC to whitewash various events to the satisfaction of nobody.

This could have been further complicated by the fact that the antagonists that have themselves been exonerated might be expected to continue to provide their own versions of truth, if no longer the official version perpetrated in school curricula. The tendency to gloss over details could have become problematic since the versions presented by the TMT and EOKA elements would not have shied away from the alleged atrocities committed against their own communities, respectively. Without the kind of 'truth' extracting powers of the South African TRC the RC would have been in a less credible position of challenging the other versions so righteously proclaimed.

On balance, though, the risks here were limited by the fact that the official version propagated in the school curricula would have been that of the RC, not of the ethno-nationalists or other groups opposed to the RC version. At that point the merits of the RC version itself would have been scrutinised.

These potential pitfalls are of course not necessarily the sole fault of the foreseen structure and mandate of the RC as prescribed in the Annan Plan. Rather they relate to the complexity of that particular 'new state of affairs'. At the end of the day the educational systems would have been governed "sovereignly" by the respective constituent state governments and authorities. Whereas curricular changes would have been mandated by the RC, the implementation of such matters would have proven a matter of political will. The Annan Plan called for follow-up measures whereby constituent state authorities regularly report on the progress of implementation, but there were no penalties for failing to observe such guidelines.

Suggestions (Beyond the Failed Referenda)

The point of reference for this paper has been the Reconciliation Commission as envisioned in the Annan Plan. The contemporary question is whether there is a need to consider such an institution despite the continuing political impasse regarding a formal, comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus problem. The plan's namesake, Mr Kofi Annan, no longer serves as UN Secretary General. It remains to be seen what his successor, Ban Ki-moon, will do to bring the sides closer to a settlement.

Short of a negotiated comprehensive settlement to the Cyprus settlement, there is the need to pursue these matters in the interim. Exactly how the sides reconcile, however, given the historical ambiguities referred to throughout this essay, would continue to prove to be a hindrance.

This, in turn, requires consideration of whether it is even possible to contemplate a Reconciliation Commission, let alone whether it is desirable. If the efforts of Ibrahim Gambari, UN Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in the summer of 2006 are anything to go by, the UN would prefer that the sides in Cyprus deal with reconciliation, sooner rather than later. To that end, the "set of principles" brokered by Mr Gambari and signed by the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot leaders, respectively, envisions "bi-communal discussion" of both 'day to day' issues, as well as 'substantive' matters. The latter would be matters to be dealt with through what Gambari termed "expert bi-communal working groups", whereas the 'day to day' issues would be tackled through "Technical Committees".

The agreement also called on the sides to refrain from engaging in the "blame game", but in the ensuing months it became clear that the sides would not keep their commitments. This seems to be largely driven by the asymmetry in the relationship, where the Greek-Cypriot leadership remains the recognised government of the Republic of Cyprus. Thus, the issue of Turkey's bid to join the

European Union, and its legal obligation to extend customs union to (southern) Cyprus proved to undermine intercommunal efforts to build momentum on issues in Cyprus. Turkey, for its part, citing the European Union's own pledges to "lift the isolation" of the Turkish-Cypriot community, has failed to ratify an extension of the Ankara Protocol regarding trade, and refused to open its ports to Greek-Cypriot (i.e. Republic of Cyprus) vessels. The Greek-Cypriot leadership considers this critical, since in failing to extend customs union, Turkey remains committed to its policy of non-recognition of the Republic of Cyprus government. Thus, the Republic of Cyprus authorities demand normalisation of relations between Ankara and Nicosia (in the form of customs union as indirect political recognition).

With respect to intercommunal talks in Cyprus, the issue leading up to the 2006 EU Summit was whether a deal could be brokered regarding the opening of Turkish ports to Greek-Cypriot vessels in return for the opening of the Famagusta sea port for trade with the EU. However, the deal that was to be brokered by the Finnish Presidency never materialised, and led to more acrimony regarding issues of "substance", including the status of the ghost town of Varosha that would be returned to Greek-Cypriot administration in the Annan Plan and since the 1979 High Level Agreement.

However, the specific issue of Varosha is also related to property issues more generally, with the Arestis case in the ECHR to serve as precedent for other former property owners and residents in Varosha. Diplomatic efforts to link property to confidence building measures, in turn, are deemed asymmetric by the Turkish-Cypriot leadership, thus the Turkish Cypriots have argued that property (and by extension, the return of territory, including Varosha) be treated as 'substantive' matters to be dealt with as part of a comprehensive settlement package.

Property, thus, has become another front in a cold war between the sides, with the Greek-Cypriot administration attempting to deter developments on properties formerly owned by Greek Cypriots through criminalising construction on such properties. This, in turn, increases tensions and mistrust, with the Turkish-Cypriot side encouraging such development arguing that only through something akin to Zartman's 'mutual hurting stalemate' could negotiations begin in earnest.

Whereas this dire picture may suggest limited opportunities, it is still possible – if not probable – that civil society could prove impetus where officialdom fails. Should members of both communities take the initiative and take advantage of the ability to cross, as well as of new technologies, it is conceivable that efforts at reconciliation could move from the margins to the centre. One avenue is the promotion of unofficial, Track II type initiatives through NGOs. It is plausible that the various envisioned working groups of the 8 July agreement could be simulated.

The precedent for this is the fairly recent civil society led Turkish-Cypriot “yes” campaign for the Annan Plan. Whereas the movement was subsequently co-opted by political parties (with Talat and the Republican Turkish Party the principal beneficiaries) the experience nonetheless points to means by which political impasse may be harnessed to engender alternative discourses that are supported by mass media. The weakness of civil society overall, and its subservience to political elites mitigates against the potential.²⁹ Moreover, there remain fundamental doubts about the efficacy of NGO led conflict resolution.³⁰

It is possible to engender technical help from organisations that have been established precisely for the purposes of aiding reconciliation in divided societies. One such organisation is Interpeace – The International Peacebuilding Alliance – a Swiss association with links to the UN. In particular, in aiding the process of ‘ownership’ such organisations may help the communities in Cyprus engage the process more directly. One way of empowering society, in turn, is to provide knowledge, such as through the utilisation of polling as a means of finding areas of consensus, as was done in the Northern Ireland conflict.

Should organisational handicaps be overcome, perhaps it would be wise for the active participants in reconciliation projects, be they official or unofficial, to take a fairly liberal interpretation of their mandate and push beyond the confines of the historical project to a more overt society, the real aim of any formal Commission in its essence and inception. By this I mean a broader conceptualisation of the challenge that is before both communities, that of constructing a viable Cypriot society and polity. The task itself is daunting, since the international community, including the European Union, provides few clues as to how to achieve ‘post-national’ democracy. Although much lip service is paid to a multicultural ethos, the dominance of nation-state based identities cannot be denied.

One advantage such groups and other elements of society might enjoy and thus tap into is the relative dynamism that had been evident in the run-up to the 2004 referenda in the Turkish-Cypriot community in imagining new forms of political community apart from officially constructed identities. If a similar future oriented dynamic emerges or is nurtured in the Greek-Cypriot community perhaps reconciliation can be fostered through reciprocation.

The biggest obstacle in this regard is inertia with too many Cypriots, either Greek or Turkish, not especially galvanised to act. The Annan Plan was exceptional for the Turkish-Cypriot community, where the opportunity for real change manifested. However, the plan may have also entailed real threats that deterred the Greek-Cypriot community from sharing the enthusiasm of their counterparts. The hope is that greater degrees of interdependencies, with more Turkish Cypriots

enrolled in schools in the south of the island, for instance, could induce greater demand for discourse and mediating institutions.

However, this might require a more fundamental discourse than one based on the interpretations of the past, but include discussion on the society of present and visions of the future. Currently the various monuments and other symbols of national identity are overbearing for either community, and this needs to be addressed. One way of achieving this dialogue is to see to it that much of the work is transparent and that the process of drafting reports entails significant input from society.

Conclusion

This paper has tried to address the question as to whether Cyprus needs a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I have argued that the Reconciliation Commission provided for in the Annan Plan and its aim of providing for a more empathetic treatment of Cyprus history is more appropriate for Cyprus than the South African model of Truth and Reconciliation. The reasons for this are varied, but boil down to the lapse of time and the lesser need to account for individual cases of human rights violations. Therefore, 'truth' is a less pressing matter in the Cypriot context than it may be in parts of the world where wounds are more recent. No doubt there would still be a need for closure for many who have lost loved ones and desire an accounting, but the process of ascertaining reparations in the Cypriot context would prove divisive as the members of the respective communities would prefer a higher price for their particular grievances and the costs of such a process might prove too prohibitive for the economy.

The more urgent need in the United Cyprus Republic would be the construction of an historical account that would be inclusive. Moreover, it is the contemporary problems related to the current crossings, not the past, which should form the inducement for reconciliation.

Whereas the need for an official or unofficial Reconciliation Commission is beyond doubt, the paper explored some of the potential problems or pitfalls that may await the Commission. In the case of the Annan Plan, the major pitfall was not only the limited remit of the Commission, but the potential for politicisation. In the contemporary, post-Annan Plan, period, the problem is that there may be a lack of sufficient political cooperation for the formal establishment of a reconciliation commission through political authorities.

I suggested that whether an official commission was established or not, efforts toward reconciliation could be achieved through civil society initiatives. Such

initiatives would do well to push the limits of the mandate (as described in the Annan Plan) of the Reconciliation Commission in the knowledge that the ultimate goal is not to rewrite history but to come up with the means to sustain a viable political society on the island. To this end the process of drafting reports and other activities should be as inclusive and participatory as possible.

Overall the conclusion is that despite some risks the Reconciliation Commission in its form in the Annan Plan, or with modest revision, should serve the United Cyprus Republic and its citizens well.

Notes

1. Main Articles, Article 11.
2. See Annan's report to the UN Security Council on his mission of good offices in Cyprus of 1 April 2003 (S/2003/398), paragraph 125.
3. Annex VIII, Article 3, section 2.
4. See Annex VIII, Article 3, section 4 where it stipulates that "[t]he work, proceedings, reports and recommendations of the Commission shall be without prejudice to the work of other existing bodies or committees, including the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus".
5. Constitution, Part VII (Transitional Provisions), Article 54.
6. Main Articles, Article 12.
7. Separate and simultaneous referenda were held on either side of the Green Line on 24 April 2004. Whereas nearly 65 per cent of those voting in the Turkish controlled north approved the plan, more than 75 per cent of the Greek-Cypriot voters rejected the plan in the south. Accordingly the Annan Plan was declared null and void. The current political impasse on the island relates to the bases for new negotiations and to what extent various provisions foreseen in the Annan Plan may carry over to new talks.
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 21. See *Loizidou vs. Turkey*. No. 40/1993/435/514. 18 December 1996 and *Cyprus vs. Turkey*. App. No. 25781/94. 10 May 2001.
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THE CHALLENGE OF PEACEBUILDING: CYPRIOT VIEWS ON RECONCILIATION

Virginie Ladisch

Abstract

In the search for a solution to the 'Cyprus problem', the focus of debates and discussions has been on power sharing agreements, land exchanges, right of return, and economics, but there has been little to no focus on reconciliation. In the aftermath of the referendum in which Cypriots were given an historic opportunity to vote on the reunification of the island, this research places the concept of reconciliation at the centre of the debate about the Cyprus problem. Based on data gathered in 2005 through forty interviews with Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot politicians, businessmen, activists, academics, organisational leaders, economists, and members of civil society, this article presents Cypriots' views on reconciliation. Drawing from literature on reconciliation in conflict divided societies as a framework, it will analyse the various perceptions Cypriots hold about the definition of reconciliation, what initiatives can be used to promote reconciliation in Cyprus, the obstacles on the path towards reconciliation, and the sequencing of reconciliatory measures. Overall, this article seeks to present an alternative to strict political engineering projects that characterise the current debate about the Cyprus problem, by encouraging creative approaches to conflict resolution such as truth commissions, revised history curricula, and joint projects that foster mutual understanding and shared commitment to peace.

Historical Context

Located at a strategic crossroad of trade routes in the Mediterranean, the island of Cyprus has been plagued by a series of colonisers, occupiers, and wars. Presently, divided between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, conflicting views of history are used to entrench their respective positions. The Greek Cypriots point to a Hellenic cultural legacy that dates back to 1200 BC while the Turkish Cypriots locate their origins in 1571 when the Ottoman Turks conquered the island (Calotychos, 1998). After an extended period of Ottoman rule, Britain rented Cyprus from 1870-1914, later solidifying its rule in 1925 when Cyprus was declared a Crown Colony. In 1955 the EOKA (National Organisation of Cypriot Fighters), a revolutionary group seeking enosis, reunification with Greece, took up an armed struggle against the

British colonial authority. In an effort to quell the rebellion the British authorised the use of the Turkish-Cypriot police to stifle the independence movement. The British tactic to counter-mobilise Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots to support its colonial rule against the threat of enosis, “set the scene for one of the most intractable conflicts of the twentieth century” (Tocci, 2004, p. 43). In response to Greek-Cypriot demands for unification with Greece, fearing forced assimilation under Greek rule Turkish Cypriots rallied for taksim, or partition of the island.

Cyprus was granted independence in 1960, not as a result of a struggle for liberation on the part of the Cypriots, but rather as a way for Britain to liberate itself of the escalating conflict that had erupted on the island between competing claims from Greek Cypriots for enosis and Turkish-Cypriot demands for taksim or partition of the island. Turkey, Greece, and Britain designed the framework for the newly independent Republic of Cyprus at two peace conferences in Zurich and London in 1959. Cypriot leaders were indirectly involved in the decision-making process only after the agreement had been drafted. The Cyprus problem “was in fact settled on a bilateral basis between Greece and Turkey under British directorship” (Joseph, 1997, p. 20).

Three treaties, the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Alliance, and the Treaty of Guarantee, set up the framework for the independence of Cyprus. The power sharing arrangement established in the 1960 Constitution did not meet the demands of both sides, but each accepted it as a transitional step towards a more favourable solution. The Greek Cypriots complained about Turkish privileges and over-representation, while Turkish Cypriots felt that the regulations were necessary to protect their rights against the majority. President Makarios had unwillingly approved the Constitution, but with the hope to change it once implemented. In an attempt to address some of its problems, President Makarios proposed thirteen amendments to the Constitution that would have essentially turned the Turkish Cypriots into a minority without the protections provided in the original plan (*ibid.*, p. 28). The Turkish Cypriots and Turkey refused the thirteen amendments and became even more suspicious of Greek-Cypriot intentions to regain majoritarian control. With tensions high and the political system unworkable, intercommunal fighting broke out in 1963 placing Cyprus back on the list of unresolved ethnic conflicts.

In the early 1970s, as plans were being discussed for an intercommunal arrangement to grant autonomy to the Turkish Cypriots, hope for peace emerged. In 1974, however, the fascist Greek military junta staged a coup to overthrow President Makarios in an effort to gain control of the island and reunite it with Greece. In order to protect Turkish Cypriots, Turkey intervened militarily and gained control of 38 per cent of the island. The Turkish-Cypriot leader, Rauf Denktaş,

drafted a constitution and declared the birth of the 'Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC)' in 1983 (Hadjipavlou and Trigeorgis, 1993, p. 344). However, only Turkey recognises the 'TRNC' as a legitimate state. As a result of this unresolved conflict, Cyprus has been de facto divided since 1974 by what is known as the Green Line. The 80 per cent of Cypriots that are of Greek descent live in the southern part of the island while the 18 per cent of Cypriots that are of Turkish descent live in the northern part. Movement across this line was restricted until 23 April 2003 when the Green Line was partially opened, allowing Cypriots to move across the island on a daily basis.

Peacebuilding Efforts

Since 1964 the United Nations (UN) has been actively working to find a solution to the 'Cyprus problem'. Despite its numerous efforts at convening talks and drafting proposals, it has been argued that "the UN has achieved peacekeeping but not peacemaking" (Camp, 1998, p. 136). In the early 1990s, the European Union (EU) emerged as another actor in the Cyprus conflict. In July 1990, when the Republic of Cyprus applied for EU membership, it was hoped that in conjunction with continued UN mediation, the EU accession process would "help bring the communities on the island closer together" (Commission, 1993, para. 4). Following the culmination of years of negotiation, the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, in 2002, presented a set of proposals which became known as the Annan Plan for the reunification of Cyprus. After a series of revisions, the final version of the plan, referred to as the Annan Plan V, was unveiled on 31 March 2004.

The Annan Plan called for the establishment of the United Republic of Cyprus with a Greek-Cypriot constituent state and Turkish-Cypriot constituent state linked by a federal government. In an effort to foster peacebuilding, Article 11 of the Annan Plan called for an independent reconciliation commission to "promote understanding, tolerance, and mutual respect between Greek and Turkish Cypriots" but it did not specify how that would be done, nor did the Constitution grant the Federal government sufficient powers to implement a successful commission (Rotberg, 2003). In comparison to the articles of the Annan Plan relating to refugees, property, and power sharing, Article 11 was very brief and received relatively little attention from the media and politicians.

After several revisions and negotiations with both Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot leaders, on 24 April 2004 Cypriots were asked to vote on the Annan Plan. With the pressure of EU accession looming, the settlement was presented on 31 March 2004 giving Cypriots three weeks to decide and vote on a "plan that was to shape the lives of future generations and amend the losses of the past" (Evriviades, 2005). The Turkish Cypriots endorsed the Annan Plan V by 67 per cent whereas the Greek Cypriots rejected it by 76 per cent. From the Greek-Cypriot perspective,

the plan satisfied almost all of the Turkish-Cypriot demands but Greek Cypriots viewed the plan as undemocratic, unworkable, and permanently entrenching the division between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. As a result of the lack of support for the Annan Plan from the Greek-Cypriot community, Cyprus entered the European Union on 1 May 2004 divided and without a solution.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Reconciliation

Both in the time leading up to the referendum and in the time that has elapsed since then, there has been little to no dialogue or debate regarding the concept of reconciliation in Cyprus. When asked about whether the reconciliation commission suggested in Article 11 of the Annan Plan figured prominently in the media debates leading up to the referendum, one Turkish Cypriot responded “it was actually a joke to talk about the reconciliation commission ... reconciliation is not something people really talk about or that people have in their agendas as a priority” (Yucel, 2005). With the failure of the Annan Plan, however, some Cypriots are beginning to perceive reconciliation as something that should be given greater priority.

Before looking at Cypriot perceptions of reconciliation it is helpful to explore the theoretical debates around this concept and establish a framework from which to analyse reconciliation in Cyprus, especially with regard to the definition of reconciliation, the mechanisms of reconciliation, and the sequencing of reconciliatory initiatives. Although ‘reconciliatory measures’ such as truth commissions, reparations, and apologies have been employed since the middle of the twentieth century (see Kritz, 1995), it is only in recent years that academics from a wide range of disciplines have focused on developing theories of reconciliation that can be applied to large-scale internal or international conflicts. Previously a concept restricted to the interpersonal sphere, academics now face the challenge of creating a body of theory that can guide the implementation of reconciliation in the national and international sphere.

One of the main obstacles towards developing a body of theory on reconciliation in post-conflict settings is the lack of a clear definition of the terminology. Within peace and conflict research, reconciliation has been understood as “a process of relationship building across divisions, as a transformation of existing relationships, as well as a creation of new relationships after the horrors of war” (Ericson, 2001, p. 27). Other scholars emphasise the spiritual dimension of forgiveness and affirm that, “healing and reconciliation in violent ethnic and religious conflicts depend on a process of transactional contrition and forgiveness between aggressors and victims which is indispensable to the establishment of a new relationship based on mutual acceptance and reasonable trust” (Montville, 1993, p. 112). Equating reconciliation with forgiveness, however, is a contested area in the

development of the theory on reconciliation. Another way to conceive of reconciliation is as a process of acknowledgment of one's own suffering as well as that of the other and a willingness to reweave relations. In other words, "to reconcile does not mean to forget or even to forgive, but it means to remember without deliberating pain, bitterness, revenge, fear, or guilt and to co-exist and work for the peaceful handling of continuing differences" (Du Plessis, 2004, p. 197). In between vengeance and forgiveness, reconciliation opens a space for the acknowledgment of past wrongs and the mutual agreement to move towards a more positive future (Minow, 1998).

These various definitions of reconciliation implicitly refer to it either as a process or a goal. In describing reconciliation as an outcome, Bar-Tal and Bennink advance a notion of a reconciled society as one in which there is "mutual recognition and acceptance, invested interests and goals in developing peaceful relations, mutual trust, positive attitudes as well as sensitivity and consideration for the other party's needs and interests" (2004, p. 16). This definition presents an ideal society, which arguably does not exist. Reconciliation as a goal is an ideal state. Especially in large-scale conflicts "full reconciliation in all its aspects is improbable" (Kreisberg, 1999, p. 10). In this sense it is helpful to understand reconciliation as a process that moves towards a goal that will never fully be achieved, but a goal that serves as a model of social harmony. While it is possible to distinguish between more or less reconciled societies based on factors such as inter-group relations, openness of debate in the public sphere, legitimacy of the state, and general civic activity, the "processes of reconciliation are complex and unending ... changes in the reconciliation achieved between peoples occurs years, decades, or even centuries after an intercommunal accommodation has been reached" (*ibid.*, p. 1). There are steps that can be taken to advance reconciliation while being mindful that the outcome of a truly reconciled society is an ideal to strive towards. In the case of Cyprus where divisions have been deeply entrenched over the past thirty to forty years, it is important to emphasise reconciliation as a process so that people develop realistic expectations and have patience when reconciliation is not immediately achieved.

The types of actions that can be used to promote reconciliation are as complex and varied as the definition of the word itself. Examples of some initiatives include: truth commissions, reports, trials, writing common history, reparations such as the building of monuments or financial compensation for the victims, public ceremonies, exhumations, reburials, workshops, and support groups. While the action itself is important, the context in which that action is carried out and who initiates it are even more important. Therefore, if Cypriots decide to undertake some form of truth commission, it is important to acknowledge that "language, however eloquent, alone cannot provide [reconciliation]. The words must be received, officially

acknowledged, and incorporated into the history of the renewed state” (Phelps, 2004, p. 103). Thus it is essential for those in power to acknowledge the abuses of the past and to support the process of reconciliation in order for it to take root on the national level.

Timing is another question raised by the various definitions of reconciliation. Several scholars define reconciliation as a process that begins after the cessation of violence. Among them Whittaker describes reconciliation as “a process that takes place after conflict resolution and often takes longer than bringing the conflict to an end” (Brown and Poremski, 2005, p. viii). Requiring the cessation of hostilities as a pre-requisite for reconciliation limits the scope of possible reconciliatory initiatives. Kreisberg, a critic of this view, argues that, “actions that foster reconciliation need not await the ending of a conflict” (1999, p. 9). In some cases, it may be impossible to achieve a formal settlement of the conflict without some form of rapprochement or reconciliation. The process of reconciliation can thus be understood as containing various phases, which can be divided into pre-settlement and post-settlement. In the pre-settlement phase, “reconciliation begins with the transformation of an enemy into a future neighbour by helping the parties imagine that coexistence is possible” (Ross, 2004, p. 200). The core of the reconciliation process will take place after the formal end of the conflict, but reconciliatory initiatives have a very important role to play in creating a space in which a settlement of the conflict can be negotiated.

The growing belief that reconciliation is necessary in order “to cement peaceful relations between rival sides to an intractable conflict” raises the question of what role reconciliation can play in the Cyprus peace process (Bar-Tal and Bennink, 2004, p. 36). Debates about the definition of reconciliation, the tools that can be used to promote reconciliation, and the timing of reconciliatory measures, surfaced throughout the course of interviews conducted in Cyprus in the summer of 2005. Closer analysis reveals that a clarification and honest reckoning with past abuses and violence is essential to promoting peace in Cyprus.

Methodology

Over the course of two months, June through August 2005, Cypriots from different social sectors and from both the Turkish-Cypriot and Greek-Cypriot communities were interviewed about their views on reconciliation. Dr Maria Hadjipavlou, the facilitator of this research project and a long time scholar and activist in the field of conflict resolution in Cyprus, identified a list of key people to interview. The guiding principle in the selection of interviewees was to identify an equal number of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots who could speak about their views on reconciliation. The sample of forty Cypriots that were interviewed is not representative of the

average Cypriot but rather is focused on Cypriots who have been participants in bi-communal activities and who are in positions to influence change within Cyprus. The interviewees included politicians, academics, leaders of non-governmental organisations, economists, and members of civil society. The interviews were conducted in English and most of those interviewed were influential members of their communities either locally or nationally. Their political views covered the spectrum from supporters to opponents of the Annan Plan. Each person was asked a set of open-ended questions about reconciliation, possible tools to promote reconciliation, the timing, and challenges of pursuing reconciliation in Cyprus. Based on forty interviews, this research aims to provide a glimpse into the perceptions of reconciliation in Cyprus. Overall, this study intends to serve as a starting point for greater discussion on theories of reconciliation and how they can be incorporated into peacebuilding efforts in Cyprus.

Cypriots Speak: Interview Analysis

Based on an analysis of the interviews conducted with forty Cypriots, this section presents some of the main trends or debates among those interviewed as they relate to the definition of reconciliation, tools or mechanisms to be used to promote reconciliation, and the sequencing of reconciliatory initiatives.

The Cyprus Problem

This research is based on the premise that there is a conflict in Cyprus, although latent and non-violent, it is a conflict nonetheless. In other words, there is a division that needs to be reconciled or resolved. This conflict is often referred to as the 'Cyprus problem'. While this term is widely used, there are a variety of conflicting perceptions about what the Cyprus problem actually involves. For some Greek Cypriots the Cyprus problem begins in 1974 with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. For many Turkish Cypriots the Cyprus problem stems from the first struggles for enosis led by the Greek Cypriots in the early 1950s. For those Greek Cypriots that view the problem as a result of the Turkish invasion, they believe that once the military pulls out of Cyprus, the conflict will be resolved. This view, however, angers many Turkish Cypriots who have memories of intercommunal fighting in the 1960s and fears of domination by the Greek-Cypriot majority. Reconciliation, as described in the following sections, has a role to play in clarifying the origins of the Cyprus problem and working towards its resolution.

Definitions of Reconciliation

While there is disagreement over the origin of the Cyprus problem, there was a significant level of consensus about the term 'reconciliation'. Overall, the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot definitions of reconciliation were very similar, focusing primarily on understanding, dialogue, and acknowledgement. While a few

interviewees included some element of forgiveness in their definition of reconciliation, most definitions presented by Cypriots from both the Greek and Turkish communities were similar to the definition put forward by Martha Minow and Willemien Du Plessis. In this sense reconciliation, according to those interviewed, is understood in social/political terms rather than in spiritual terms. The emphasis was on creating dialogue and mutual understanding about the past, acknowledging the harm done on both sides, and moving forward. Whereas in some countries people tend to have negative perceptions of reconciliation as an evasion of justice, on the whole Cypriots viewed reconciliation as something positive.

In some contexts, reconciliation is closely linked with justice involving trials and punishment for perpetrators. In Cyprus, however, retributive justice is not one of the pressing concerns that surfaces in people's reflections on reconciliation. The definitions of reconciliation echoed three main themes: the need to understand the past, an acknowledgement of mutual suffering, and a commitment to forward looking approaches based on cooperation and mutual respect.

Almost everyone interviewed touched on the need to understand the past in order to move towards reconciliation. According to Katie Clerides, a Greek-Cypriot member of parliament, reconciliation involves, "understanding the roots of conflict" (2005). This sentiment was echoed by a representative of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce who defined reconciliation as a state of being that calls upon one "to be able to understand what happened in the past. To be able to understand the past from the other point of view as well and to put this together to understand it, accept it, acknowledge it and to move on" (Beyatli, 2005). Therefore, one of the first steps in the process of reconciliation involves a re-examination of the past.

Once there is a common understanding of each community's views about the past, according to those interviewed, reconciliation involves an acknowledgement of the other. Another representative of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce explained that, "reconciliation means that first of all you have to understand what are the needs and interests and what are the perceptions of the other side. Once you analyse that properly, you should strive towards empathy" (Damdelen, 2005). The need for acknowledgement was echoed by a Greek-Cypriot social anthropologist who explained that, "reconciliation means coming to terms with the injustices and pain that you may have caused the other, accepting and respecting the others, and of course asking them to also acknowledge their own violence against you" (Papadakis, 2005). While this acknowledgment is important, Nicos Anastasiou, a Greek-Cypriot leader of a bicomunal youth organisation realises that this process will not be easy and requires a significant amount of courage. In his view, "reconciliation may mean being existentially brave enough to understand

and acknowledge that our side, whatever it might be, has also done terrible things” (Anastasiou, 2005). Thus, once the past is understood, both sides need to be open to acknowledge the suffering of the other and in this way break out of a pattern of self-victimisation, and open a space in which to see the ‘other’ as human.

The third element of reconciliation expressed in the interviews with Greek and Turkish Cypriots, emphasises the need for future cooperation and forward looking measures. Focusing on the future, a Greek-Cypriot political science professor at the University of Cyprus believes that “reconciliation means both can live together, interact, and look at each other as citizens of the same country without placing too much emphasis on what divides them, but rather what unites them” (Joseph, 2005). From a similar perspective, a Turkish-Cypriot politician emphasised that “reconciliation means accepting to come to terms with each other, accepting to restrain some of your demands in exchange for peaceful harmonious coexistence. To reconcile we have to forgive a lot of things and focus on the benefits that the future can bring” (Nami, 2005). Summing up the focus on past, present, and future, a Turkish-Cypriot banker explains that, “reconciliation is perhaps acknowledging that two parties have hurt each other in the past, it is a decision to acknowledge this and at the same time to show sincere willingness to put differences aside and start to work together again for a common good” (Besimler, 2005).

Overall, what is striking about the definitions of reconciliation presented by both Greek and Turkish Cypriots is the similarity and relative consensus about what reconciliation entails. While each person emphasised slightly different angles of reconciliation, in general they tended to focus on knowledge about the past, understanding and acknowledging each others suffering, and getting past differences for the benefit of future cooperation.

Mechanisms for Promoting Reconciliation

Based on the provision for a reconciliation commission envisioned in Article 11 of the Annan Plan, Cypriots were asked to comment on their perceptions of such a commission and on what other tools or mechanisms could be used to promote reconciliation in Cyprus. While there were different views about whether or not a reconciliation commission, as envisioned in Article 11 of the Annan Plan would be useful or necessary in Cyprus, there was a general consensus that education would be a crucial tool in working towards reconciliation in Cyprus. In addition to a commission and educational reforms, seminars in the workplace, and economic cooperation were put forward as other tools to promote reconciliation.

There was no clear consensus over whether or not a reconciliation commission as suggested in Article 11 of the Annan Plan would be the most effective tool for promoting reconciliation in Cyprus. Responses ranged from a priori endorsement

as stated by a Greek-Cypriot cable television news editor, "I think a reconciliation commission would be good for both sides" (Kotzamani, 2005), to questionable support as expressed by a Turkish-Cypriot PhD candidate, who said, "of course [a reconciliation commission] would be useful, but I don't think it is extremely necessary, but I guess that [it] could be useful to have a true account of history, because everybody has their own version" (Latif, 2005). Others, such as a Greek Cypriot involved in bi-communal work who has requested to remain anonymous, doubted whether a commission was the best method of promoting reconciliation at all, "there is definitely a need for reconciliation. I do not know how effective [a] reconciliation commission is; I don't know" (2005). Echoing this ambivalence over the value of a commission, a Turkish-Cypriot intellectual commented that, "some kind of reconciliation committee has to be established; but as I say, without the committee a lot of reconciliation can be done" (Hatay, 2005).

If there were to be a reconciliation commission in Cyprus, several of those interviewed emphasised the need for political support. As a Turkish-Cypriot businessman explained, "[a reconciliation commission] is needed, it is a must," adding with a note of caution, "of course for this you need commitment from the state level" (Atai, 2005). Not only would such a commission not be effective without political support, many warned that it may prove counterproductive. According to a Greek-Cypriot member of parliament, "for such a commission to really produce results it needs to be backed by the political will of both sides to find an agreement. If it is used only as an excuse for divisionary tactics in other fields, then I can't see how it would serve. If it is an expression of a general will and it is backed politically then it can work. Otherwise, every step it takes without political backing it could create more tension and more conflict" (Mavrou, 2005). While political support is seen as essential, some of those interviewed expressed ambivalence over political involvement. In their view, a commission would need to be supported by the state but remain independent from it. A Turkish-Cypriot professor expressed that, "I think it is a very useful tool, but it depends on what sort of a committee could be built. If the members of this committee are going to be appointed by Mr Papadopoulos or by Mr Talat, that will do more harm than good" (Azgin, 2005).

Very few Cypriots expressed clear recommendations for the specific mandate of a possible reconciliation commission. The few that did, however, did not advocate for naming of perpetrators or for retributive punishment. According to Katie Clerides, since Cyprus is such a small island, punishment for past crimes is not necessary and could even be harmful. The truth telling aspect of a commission would be important, but she says, "I don't think it would be good to try to say that people should be punished after all these years, but I think the story telling aspect could be important". In terms of naming names, she answered that "I am not sure how helpful that is in a small society. But it is important for Greek Cypriots to know

that Turkish Cypriots were rounded up and slaughtered by Greek Cypriots and vice versa” (Clerides, 2005).

Beyond a specific reconciliation commission as described in the Annan Plan, several Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots suggested other tools that could perhaps be even more effective in promoting reconciliation. Some of the suggestions included an official apology from representatives of both sides, training seminars in the workplace to prepare people to eventually work together in the federal government, informative media campaigns, and economic cooperation across the Green Line. However, the most frequently cited tool for promoting reconciliation was education, and more specifically history education. According to a Greek Cypriot who spoke on condition of anonymity, “education is the most powerful tool on earth. If education did that much damage to this island, then it must be education which will correct it. [We need to] rewrite the history books in such a way that they would recognise the problems but also give reasons for the problems in a rational way to give people a perspective that is more rational” (2005). A Turkish-Cypriot intellectual agreed that the educational system of both sides of the island has been more destructive than constructive. As a result, one of the first steps in a process of reconciliation needs to be to provide correct information. In his view, “getting rid of myths on both sides is very important in order to achieve a healthy relationship between the two communities. All this victimisation and demonisation has to be stopped” (Hatay, 2005).

In order to overcome these myths and victimisation the majority of people interviewed focused on the role of schools and teachers. According to a Greek-Cypriot professor of social anthropology, Cypriots need to “develop a different approach to history; a more multi-perspective approach where history is not just one truth that the students have to learn, but that they have to do their own research and have a critical understanding of the notion of history” (Papadakis, 2005). He expressed a need to reform the way in which history is taught, but also to adjust the way in which certain dates and anniversaries are celebrated. National commemorations currently work to further entrench divisions. The 20th of July, for example, the day that marks the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, is celebrated with fireworks on the Turkish-Cypriot side and solemn reflection on the Greek-Cypriot side.

In addition to history lessons, a Turkish-Cypriot professor stressed the importance of the language in the process of reconciliation. In his view it is essential to have Greek language lessons in Turkish schools, and Turkish language lessons in Greek schools because “knowledge of language can help to understand the culture and the way of thinking of the ‘other’ side, thus enabling individuals to feel empathy towards the other” (Azgin, 2005). Additional research on this subject

shows that overall, in the educational system, there is a need to “develop pedagogies that construct citizenship education which accepts difference and the notion of hybrid identities by relaxing the emphasis on separate identities” (Zembylas and Karahasan, 2006, p. 25).

Two members of the media, one Greek Cypriot and the other Turkish Cypriot both advocated for using the media as a means to overcome the misinformation people have about the past and about the other community. “We should start through the media, giving the right information, not propaganda, and information so that you can understand the other side ... we need to open the communication channels between both sides,” argues Hüseyin Gürsan, the director of BRT, a Turkish-Cypriot state owned television station (Gürsan, 2005). A Greek-Cypriot member of parliament and director of a radio station, agreed that “the owners of media have a large role to play in this process because of the influence they yield” (Hatzi Georgiou, 2005).

While Cypriots had various suggestions for tools to promote reconciliation, especially education, very few people had a clear understanding of what role a reconciliation commission could or should play. Some envision it as a type of court to resolve disputes. Others, including a Greek-Cypriot professor of political science, saw it as a technical committee, saying that “a technical committee, for example, would give advice and coordinate how schools of the two sides could share some activities, coordinate and facilitate some educational activities; in that sense it could be good” (Joseph, 2005). But on the whole those interviewed were not very familiar with other truth commissions and how such a truth commission could work in the context of Cyprus. Most people thought it would be a positive step towards reconciliation, but were not very clear in its mandate or specific activities. This reveals either a lack of knowledge about truth commissions or, and most likely, it reveals a lack of preparedness or need for a reconciliation commission at this time. In this context, alternative measures should be explored and implemented where possible.

If there is another referendum in Cyprus or another proposed plan for its reunification, most Cypriots agreed that more work needs to be done to build trust and a platform for common dialogue between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The various mechanisms suggested by those interviewed could be used to promote greater reconciliation, but what was highlighted as crucial for any such reconciliation to take root was the idea that future efforts be undertaken on a wider and more public dimension. As one Turkish-Cypriot businessman involved in bi-communal activities commented, “the number of people who went through the workshops prior to the opening of the gates does not exceed the hundreds, maybe one thousand” (Besimler, 2005). Now that the Green Line is open, efforts at

reconciliation need to extend beyond select individuals and should be more public. In the past, due to restrictions created by the closed demarcation line, many bi-communal workshops were conducted with a select few and in secret. “The fact that a lot of this work was done quietly with not a lot of publicity proved to its disadvantage because there was an attempt to present it as something being done in secret involving only a chosen few,” explained a Greek-Cypriot member of parliament (Mavrou, 2005). With the benefit of the open Green Line and lifted restrictions there should be greater emphasis on common projects, direct communication between the two sides, and clear information about any future proposals. It will be crucial to dispel myths and equip people with knowledge about plans for reunification so that they can make an informed decision about the future of Cyprus.

Sequencing of Reconciliation Initiatives

Based on the variety of tools suggested, Cypriots reflected on the relative timing of such mechanisms. According to theories of reconciliation put forward by Louis Kreisberg, reconciliatory tools can be used before a conflict has ended. With the failure of the Annan Plan, one could argue that in Cyprus, a settlement will not be reached until the process of reconciliation has started to take hold among key members of society. Overall, the Cypriots interviewed expressed a variety of views about the sequencing of reconciliation.

There were those who agreed with Whittaker’s theory that reconciliation takes place after the conflict has ended. In the words of a Greek-Cypriot news editor, “I don’t think there can be a reconciliation commission if there is no solution. I think the results of the committee would be questioned by both sides if there is no solution.” Furthermore, in her view, “reconciliation will come if we resolve the problems relating to economics, safety, and property” (Kotzamani, 2005). A professor at the University of Cyprus, agrees that after there is a settlement then reconciliation can begin. He stated that, “of course a reconciliation commission is a good idea, but it is the tenth step of the one-hundredth step. We have to do many things before that. We have to have a political will for reconciliation. Our leadership should tell us and give us the green light to go on and do something. Everybody is expecting some agreement. As soon as this agreement is there many things will happen, one of which is the reconciliation committee” (Georgiou, 2005).

Departing from a strict definition of the sequencing of reconciliatory measures, there were several Greek and Turkish Cypriots who believed work towards a settlement and towards reconciliation can be undertaken simultaneously. A representative of the Turkish Cypriot Chamber of Commerce expressed this view in saying, “I think they have to be together. We have to work on reconciliation as well. Now if there is a settlement, I don’t think it would work very well unless there is a

very good process of reconciliation” (Beyatli, 2005). Implicit in this comment is a belief that reconciliation may in fact help lay the groundwork for a solution to the Cyprus problem.

From the perspective that efforts towards reconciliation are helpful at any stage of the conflict, several Cypriots advocated that work should begin as soon as possible. When asked when a reconciliation commission should be established, a Turkish-Cypriot businessman responded, “Now! Yesterday! Now if there is a political will” (Atai, 2005). The sense that now is even too late was echoed by a Turkish-Cypriot member of parliament who explained that, “I think it would be a very good idea to establish such a commission or committee, today or even yesterday. And maybe this could help us to have some kind of dialogue” (Nami, 2005). Emphasising the importance of beginning the process of reconciliation, a Greek-Cypriot professor of social anthropology stresses the fact that while a commission might not be possible at the moment, many other mechanisms are available. “I think it would be important for it to start early, but it doesn’t have to be a commission, it could also be different, like the project I am working on about history education” (Papadakis, 2005). Most of the Cypriots interviewed identified a need to pursue reconciliation, but there was no clear consensus on the relationship between reconciliation and peacebuilding. The question of sequencing applies particularly to a large scale endeavour such as a reconciliation commission. With regard to other tools, such as workshops and information campaigns, Cypriots generally agreed that these could be undertaken at any point in the peacebuilding process.

The timing of reconciliatory initiatives emerged as a key uncertainty among the Cypriots interviewed. This uncertainty calls for greater research in order to identify greater consensus, but it also opens up the space for creativity and flexibility. While there was no consensus on particular sequencing, there was a relative degree of openness to a variety of options. In this way, with the proper framing and presentation, it seems that efforts at reconciliation can be undertaken at various points along the path towards the reunification of Cyprus.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Through a series of interviews, Cypriots from both the Greek and Turkish communities expressed the view that reconciliation requires an examination of the past, acknowledgement of harm done on both sides, and a willingness to work towards a common future. Eleni Mavrou, a Greek-Cypriot member of parliament captures these three elements in saying:

Reconciliation means facing our past. It involves accepting the mistakes done by the other side and accepting that both sides have suffered in one way or

another and through this process facing the future. It means understanding that we cannot continue living in the past so we should concentrate on the possibility, the capability of creating something together for the future. In the political realm, it means a dialogue that should lead to an agreement on the future constitutional, territorial, settlement of the Cyprus problem (Mavrou, 2005).

Judging from the responses given by Cypriots of both sides, breaking down historical myths and reforming the education system should be the focus of reconciliatory initiatives. Rather than a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Cyprus needs an historical clarification committee that would give voice to the various versions of the past, expose distortions of the common history and make recommendations for educational reform. Considering the lack of political will identified by most people interviewed, an official reconciliation commission is not possible at the moment, however, these Cypriots suggested several other viable initiatives to serve as tools for promoting reconciliation. These initiatives can serve as essential steps in setting the stage for the eventual resolution of the Cyprus problem.

National and international organisations and governments interested in promoting peace in Cyprus should follow these recommendations that emerged from interviews conducted in 2005:

- 1) Encourage greater discussion about reconciliation between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots and the creation of initiatives that can help foster reconciliation;
- 2) Define reconciliation as an ongoing process in order to avoid unrealistic expectations;
- 3) Establish a committee to clarify and present various perspectives on the 'Cyprus Problem' with the goal of promoting understanding and mutual acknowledgement;
- 4) Lobby for an official apology for past human rights violations to be given by officials on both sides of the conflict;
- 5) Develop and implement training seminars in the workplace, especially at the governmental level, to prepare people to work together if the island is reunified;
- 6) Promote economic cooperation across the Green Line and encourage joint business ventures between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots;
- 7) Initiate a media campaign promoting information about reconciliation and different perspectives on the Cyprus problem; and most importantly,
- 8) Focus on education, reforming the history curriculum and promoting history education that encourages critical thinking and honest exploration of the past from a variety of perspectives.

Overall, the Cypriots interviewed believe that a reconciliation commission as

discussed in the Annan Plan could be useful, but many people stressed the fact that beyond a commission there were many other mechanisms that could be used to begin the process of reconciliation. While it is debatable which measures Cypriots see as most favourable, there was a general consensus on the need for reconciliation. A Turkish-Cypriot professor of political science highlights the need for reconciliatory mechanisms saying that, “such activities are needed in Cyprus because there are particular groups, which are promoting hostility between the two communities. A counter-activity at the eve of peace is necessary in order to create appropriate conditions for peacebuilding” (Vural, 2005). It is unrealistic to wait until political negotiations resume in order to initiate reconciliatory measures. The process of reconciliation needs to begin immediately so that it can lay the groundwork for open dialogue, trust building, and understanding which are all essential to the success of any settlement of the Cyprus problem.

Notes

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NORTHERN IRELAND – PEACE WITHOUT RECONCILIATION

David Officer

Abstract

Recent events in Northern Ireland suggest that peace has finally been achieved and a new era of improved inter-community relations has commenced. However, the conditions within which the major communities experience antagonistic relations have not been displaced but entrenched within the new political dispensation. Through an exploration of what reconciled relationships might demand it is apparent that whilst peace has been achieved the promise of reconciliation has yet to be realised.

On 8 May 2007, the leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Rev Dr Ian Paisley joined Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein on a shared platform at Stormont Government buildings in East Belfast. The polysemic symbolism of the event, staged as a media spectacle, suggested a wide range of different ways to interpret its significance despite considerable energy expended by civil servants, journalists, politicians and others to fix the proceedings as an 'historic breakthrough', 'a symbolic end to the Troubles' or the 'new dawn of a reconciled Northern Ireland'.¹

Paisley, eighty years old, and an internationally recognisable figure, has been widely identified with both the cause and course of what has been labelled euphemistically 'the Troubles', a period of violence and political turmoil experienced over the past forty-five years.² McGuinness, who had once been the young Irish republican activist from the Bogside district in the northern city of Derry/Londonderry³ had himself come to the world's attention in the aftermath of 'Bloody Sunday', an event in which thirteen civilians had been killed by the British Army following a civil rights demonstration in 1972. Whilst Paisley formed his own party in 1971 to challenge the hegemony of the Official Unionist Party (subsequently renamed the Ulster Unionist Party – the UUP), which had been in power from the formation of developed local government⁴ in 1921 until its suspension in 1972, McGuinness had joined the Provisional Irish Republican Army in 1970 and, so it has been asserted, had a seat on the PIRA's Army Council for much of the past three decades.⁵ During this time the organisation had engaged in a violent struggle to stymie any attempt to return to Stormont rule, remove partition and dissolve Northern Ireland into a united Ireland.

These individual profiles are of importance because both exemplify and, in turn, have been active in shaping many of the contours of Northern Ireland's recent past. It is tempting to render both as complex ciphers through a jagged and complex relationship between competing nationalisms, ethnicities, ideologies or political projects that have been encoded. Each represented, in a highly condensed form, opposing visions of Northern Ireland or the 'six occupied counties' with Paisley seeking to copper fasten the Union with Great Britain and McGuinness seeking to secure a thirty-two county Irish Republic.

Viewed from a distance they appear as natural representatives of two nationalised communities each ranged against the other: The British in Ulster and the Irish of the north of Ireland locked into an endlessly repetitive struggle freighted with considerable historical weight. Drawing closer it becomes clearer that both ought to be recognised as representative of more obdurate tendencies within each of the respective communities from which support is drawn. Paisley's DUP, was the smaller political party in terms of electoral support assuming a dominant position within Ulster unionism in 2005 by supplanting the UUP led by David Trimble. McGuinness, is a prominent member of a political party tied by umbilical cord to a paramilitary organisation – PIRA – which only began to emerge as a serious force following the 'political turn' of the Republican Movement precipitated by the success of mass mobilisations in support of hunger strikes, in the pursuit of political status, waged by Republican prisoners in the Maze prison in 1981. Twenty-five years later Sinn Fein had displaced the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), led by John Hume, as the main representative of the northern nationalist community.⁶

A decoding of the symbolics at play on the platform at Stormont could also make much of how each represented political tendencies that had resolutely opposed previous, state sponsored, initiatives to reconvene inter-community relationships with Northern Ireland and between Ireland and the United Kingdom. New governmental structures had been proposed in the past; the Sunningdale Agreement in 1973 and the Anglo-Irish Agreement in 1985 to name but two, both of which had been met by strenuous resistance mounted by both Sinn Fein and the DUP whose chosen means of protest had frequently gone well beyond trading reasoned debating points or peaceful public assemblies. By contrast Sinn Fein had taken an active negotiating position in shaping the Belfast Agreement in 1998.⁷ Paisley's party had remained implacably opposed to an initiative that was characterised as having not only conceded much too much to Irish Republicans but also rendered the Union substantially weaker.

Whilst not widely entertained within the mass media's interpretation of the Stormont event, a rather more 'hard nosed' or realist reading, shared by many residing in Northern Ireland itself was to enquire what the conflict of the past forty

years had actually been about. More specifically, how over 3,500 people had lost their lives; approximately 47,000 significant injuries had been sustained; 37,000 shooting and 16,000 shooting incidents had been recorded only to see representatives of those who could be said to bear a heavy responsibility for the injuries done and quality of life compromised, ending up sharing the spoils of power?

Another, perhaps more nuanced reading, might assert that it required precisely those who had pursued the more fundamentalist political projects, and provoked others to acts of violence to buy into the Belfast Agreement and bring their respective constituencies with them, that was the only way of securing stability governed by a set of agreed rules of conduct that could eventually bring 'the Troubles' to a verifiable conclusion.

From the vantage point of May 2007, much had indeed been achieved which, seen within the long duress of the North's history signified real progress beyond the remorseless inter-community antagonisms of the past. It would be churlish to downplay, still less to dismiss, the signs of progress which had been reflected in a dramatic decline in violent death or injury largely arising out of the cessation of paramilitary activities as well as the return of British troops to barracks and their eventual redeployment elsewhere in the world. During the accompanying period there has also been a perceptible modification of many material practices and related discourses which have created the space for new, less antagonistic relationships to emerge and an experiment in partnership government to commence. Further, the Belfast Agreement had promoted a significant recalibration of inter-state relationships between Britain and Ireland which has diluted the zero-sum calculations which almost invariably attend issues of sovereignty. Within Northern Ireland itself there have been hard fought reforms of major institutions including the Police Service (formerly the Protestant dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary), the introduction of tough anti-discrimination legislation placed on the statute book as well as the establishment of an Equality and Human Rights Commission and other institutions intended to oversee the successful amelioration of the previous causes of conflict.

At the centre of this changing landscape stand those political institutions established by the Belfast Agreement which reactivated devolved government in Northern Ireland, after many fits and starts, in April 2007. In essence, the Agreement provided for the establishment of a power-sharing executive which was to administer government departments on the basis of proportionality measured by the electoral strength of the parties secured through local Assembly elections. This consociational arrangement was materialised in a 108-seat Assembly with dual leadership embodied in the posts of the First Minister (Ian Paisley) and Deputy First

Minister (Martin McGuinness). The decision-making mechanism within the Assembly rests on parallel procedures of inter-community consent which requires that key issues can only be determined by the Assembly if there is an overall majority plus one of those designated as nationalist or unionist when the vote is taken.

Peace without Reconciliation

Less than two weeks after the Stormont event had been concluded the Northern Ireland Office announced that a new twenty-five feet-high 'Peace Wall' was to be erected in the grounds of a school in north Belfast.⁸ This security barrier was judged necessary to impede the frequently violent exchanges which have continued to characterise relationships between nationalist and unionist communities particularly in this part of the city. It joined one of forty-six other 'Peace Walls' and eleven fortified gates, which act to control the flow of people from one location to another and total approximately thirteen miles in length. Of further significance was that this new edition to the local security apparatus – aimed at separating antagonistic communities – was one of many erected during the course of the 'Peace Process'. The number of 'Peace Walls' deemed necessary had risen from eighteen in the early 1990s to their present level. A further ironic twist to these developments was that the grounds through which the barrier was to be erected belonged to Hazelwood Primary School, an integrated educational institution catering to pupils from both major ethnic communities in the north, in a region where approximately 95 per cent of children attend state schools (almost exclusively Protestant in Background) or maintained schools (exclusively Catholic).

This event, like many others which could be cited, provides an important symbolic counterpoint to the appearance of partnership, cooperation and consensual relationships projected by the resumption of devolved government at Stormont. Moving away from an institutional and party political account of the present state of Northern Ireland, critical questions can be raised in relation to the quality of peace and reconciliation as well as the nature of inter-community relationships, social processes and social forces which can either enhance or circumscribe the prospects of a genuinely reconciled society.

Despite undoubted progress, the North remains a deeply divided society which has yet to come to terms with the bitter legacy of violence and frequently destructive inter-ethnic competition. In a place where the parading of cultural difference is both widespread and forthright, high levels of inter-community mistrust remain and residential and educational segregation determines important aspects of the lives of a significant majority of the population. In a recent case study of the city of Belfast, Peter Shirlow and Brendan Murtagh highlight an urban space within which;

... the majority of persons from a Catholic or Protestant background live in places that are at least 81 per cent Catholic or Protestant. Just over two-thirds of Catholics (67.3 per cent) and 73 per cent of Protestants live in such places. A mere 10.7 per cent of Catholics and 7.0 [per cent] of Protestants live in places that are between 41 [per cent] and 60 per cent Catholic or Protestant, places that could be described as mixed.⁹

As the authors assert, the period of the 'Peace Process' has not seen any substantial decline in the occupational or segregated spaces which remain the crucial sites for the reproduction of antagonistic difference. So, whilst there has been a significant decline in the numbers of people killed, frequently taken as a crude mono-dimensional index of peace, violence has not been wished away but transformed into violence perpetrated at the interface between segregated communities, attacks on symbolic targets, or the felt need to police boundaries.

The attachment to mono-ethnicised space appears to have remained as resolute as it was during the most intense periods of violence experienced in the 1970s. So, whilst Northern Ireland has witnessed a considerable amount of effort being expended on officially sponsored peace-building efforts over the past decade, this has also been accompanied by frequent acts of intimidation, street violence and widespread instances of territorial disputes between local communities.

There are a range of factors which can be identified as making a significant contribution to maintaining and reproducing segregated space. In the first instance, it is important to acknowledge that the felt need expressed by many who reside in mono-ethnic communities to articulate demands for the maintenance and, in some instances, extension of boundary-making practices and/or physical barriers, is real enough. This is frequently couched in a discourse that identifies fear of the other and the potential of contamination which would follow if unhindered contact with the hostile outsider was permitted to proceed.

Boundary-making practices and related discourses not only have the consequence of casting potential inter-community contact in a decidedly negative light as potentially threatening the physical or ideological integrity of a community, but they also serve to create the perceived necessity to police the community and impose internal homogeneity. Demand for continued segregation, rooted in an expression of fear, also supplies a justificatory logic for the continued functioning of paramilitary organisations even after, in some instances, a formal cessation of violence has been publicly declared. This is neatly encapsulated by the watch words, incorporated within wall murals extolling the virtues of the loyalist Ulster Volunteer Force: 'Prepared for Peace – Ready for War'.

Consent for the imposition of internal unity on the community has also been a task ceded to organised paramilitary groups resulting in the intimidation of those who have been judged to step out of line by either questioning the authority – as those appointed as the custodians of the community's integrity – or demonstrating practically that not all inter-community relations need proceed on the basis of anxiety, fear or inevitable conflict.

Yet, the continued maintenance of segregated spaces in Northern Ireland has rested on the experience of fear, whether designated as real or imagined. From the perspective of a wide variety of what can be designated as 'ethnic entrepreneurs', segregated space is a bankable asset through which significant capital can be derived. A shared commitment to a particular space of this nature enables the transcendence of other, potentially competing forms, of internal differentiation; engenders a sense of unity and common purpose, and under girds the experience of a common identity. Within the political arena which pertains in Northern Ireland, where identity politics based on a complex combination of ethnicity, nationalism and religion remains paramount, the continued reproduction of segregated space is a necessary correlate of dominant forms of political discourse. As Shirlow and Murtagh observe:

... disparate ideological and discursive boundaries between these [segregated] communities are maintained by a determined lack of interaction across 'interfaces' that physically replicate these discursive edges.¹⁰

What can be identified here is the mutual constitution of segregated spaces and exclusivist discourses which, as we shall see later, serve to undermine free, fair and open dialogue, a necessary aspect of reconciliatory process. Importantly, space is not to be understood crudely as a container within which separatist ideologies can be successfully sustained but also as productive of a sense of radical difference with the other and serves to prioritise the need to exert special control in the face of any challenge.

What has also been characteristic of the politics which has accompanied the trajectory of the 'Peace Process' over the course of the past fifteen years has been the demonstrable potency of both unionist and loyalist, nationalist and republican narratives of violence, harm and the apportioning of responsibility which draws on conflicting narratives of the past. A prominent example of this has been the considerable energy expended, in conditions where lethal violence has abated, to effect a strict separation between the bone fide victim, identifiable agents of harm and the apparently irresistible desire to wear the mantle of victimhood.

The appearance of internal unity does not only rest on the maintenance of a clearly delineated space within which a homogeneous community is said to reside,

but on an imputed history and an assertion of historical depth, within which a clear separation is effected between the blameless victim and the guilty antagonist. What tends to be prioritised is not only the identification of the blameless victim, in the form of either an individual or a whole community, but the concomitant disavowal of the victimhood of the other. To admit otherwise would be perceived to set a dangerous precedent. The potential danger involved in conceding this status to the other is that it potentially undermines the ideological security of one's own community's self-understanding and may precipitate a gradual acceptance of responsibility for demeaning or inhuman acts and threaten the legitimacy of previously maintained positions.

The difficult transition from war to peace has not proceeded along a straight line but combines leaps forward and steps back, circuitous routes of advance and frequent retreats. The termination of lethal violence has only given way to a sharper antagonism between competing communities in the struggle over scarce resources. Ironically, it can be argued that the relationship between the two major communities has in many ways worsened during a period of avowed peace-making, and has been modified to accommodate newly emerging conditions. The forms of violence now practiced have been reordered or transformed into a pattern of a quite different sort. Where, in the past, paramilitary/state confrontations determined much of the nature of violent action and response, the new conditions of peace and political settlement have been accompanied by violence of a much more overtly sectarian nature, characterised by interface rioting, boundary policing and attacks on symbolic targets. As such, the forms which the conflict now takes can be related to the accomplished fact of devolved government in Northern Ireland, a major site within which resource competition between the political representatives of the major communities each vie for advantage. The limited but important powers available to local politicians through those institutions brought into being by the Belfast Agreement is a novel departure placed within the history of Northern Ireland from its foundation in the early 1920s. The Official Unionist Party (later re-named the Ulster Unionist Party) remained the ruling party, exercising control over the local state apparatus until Stormont was prorogued in 1972 and Direct Rule from Westminster was imposed. Direct Rule continued until 2007, with intermittent, but ultimately unsuccessful, attempts to establish a power-sharing executive since 1998. With a functioning Assembly and Executive now in place, political representatives are for the first time engaged in the allocation of social, political and economic resources which had not previously been made available for distribution. With the assumption of many responsibilities by local political parties which had previously been the responsibility of Westminster and the Northern Ireland Office, together with the withdrawal of troops to their barracks, the relationship between the communities of the North have become that much more direct, and are no longer as distant as they were in the past or mediated through the practice of Direct Rule.

The juncture reached in 2007 is one in which the conflict within Northern Ireland has been successfully transformed from one characterised by lethal violence to the appearance of partnership in government. What has not been accomplished, however, is a substantive change in the nature of the communities to the conflict. Indeed, at the level of political representation the more assertive parties to the conflict have risen to prominence, and the promise of a plurality of party projects occupying an expanding space between the sectarianised politics of Irish Nationalism/Republicanism and British Unionism/Ulster Loyalism, has not been fulfilled.

It could, however, be argued that the Belfast Agreement was never presented as an effective challenge to the ethno-sectarian conflict as such. The 'Peace Process', particularly as it has been driven by the British and Irish states, has been characterised by a decidedly institutional approach to conflict management which has delivered power-sharing structures. In the process, what has simultaneously been achieved is the reinforcement of those political forces that could capitalise on the presentation of their own communities as excluded, victimised and unfulfilled in securing their just reward. In short, the Agreement did not secure anything approaching a post-nationalist settlement since it never directly challenged the basis upon which ethno-sectarian competition was constituted. What has been secured is the appearance of peace but without any substantive demonstration that the peoples of the North have engaged substantially in the difficult process of reconciliation.

The Demands Reconciliation Makes

The resumption of the power-sharing Executive in May 2007 appears to suggest that opposing political forces have at last proved willing to take those opportunities made available by the outbreak of peace in Northern Ireland and the new institutions upon which much of the hope of progress had rested. Whilst peace has now been embraced, what is much less obvious is any particular enthusiasm to meet the demands necessary to secure reconciliation.

Fixated on an institutional approach to conflict management it is possible to see the struggle in and over Northern Ireland as having now been substantially transformed. The conflict, understood according to this account, as one being driven by inequality and political exclusion has been addressed even if it might still take some time for recalcitrant communities across the North to acquiesce that peace has been delivered.

This is not to suggest that either the British or Irish state or the European Union had simply abandoned the difficult task of seeking to aid and support the process

of reconciliation as a necessary component of the 'Peace Process'. Indeed, reconciliation acquired an elevated status within the official discourses of both states, and the allocation of hundreds of millions of Euros in the form of the EU's 'Peace and Reconciliation' funding packages – distributed through intermediate funding bodies such as the Community Relations Council – demonstrated an important set of commitments. To this could be added evidence of consistent support for the promotion of partnerships between disparate communities of interest and other state sponsored initiatives encompassing cross-border projects, local Police Boards and so forth. Beyond the state, significant resources had also been made available to a wide range of civil society organisations whose work explicitly incorporated a commitment to promote reconciliation.

Despite these efforts the overwhelming evidence suggests that Northern Ireland remains a deeply divided society, both segregated and sectarian. A reconciled society appears beyond grasp, suggesting that the demands which it places are just too great to meet – an unrealistic, if not utopian ambition, which would be best discarded quietly in favour of settling for an uneasy peace.

In order to judge whether this pragmatic down-grading of the priority set by some in securing reconciliation is the only realistic option available necessitates an exploration of what reconciliation might actually constitute as well as those practices, attitudes and dispositions associated with its realisation.

For some, reconciliation still carries with it the marks of its origin as an orientation promoted by faith-based organisations – a distinctly Christian theological preoccupation. Yet, since the end of the Second World War it has become evoked in a wide variety of different secular contexts and promoted as a required practice in addressing conflict arising out of a clash of interest or identity, amongst others. The task of reconciliation has been particularly widely applied in the context of attempts to resolve inter-ethnic conflict; a way of addressing colonial legacies of inequality and exclusion in a post-colonial world and in the more general promotion of more equal and less divided societies.

The appeal of reconciliation is that it approaches the sources of conflict, be it in the reproduction of differential power relations or the experience of alienation, isolation or humiliation which have conventionally been discussed through the discourse and related practices of justice, freedom and rights. However, in the context of societies such as Northern Ireland or Cyprus there is a strong suspicion that the familiar language through which the conflict and its potential settlement is articulated may not be enough. The evocation of rights and justice in particular have a marked propensity to become emptied of their meaning, hollowed out and laid claim to by those who have a distinctly proceduralist approach to issues raised by

ethnic division. Reconciliation provides an important opportunity to go well beyond the reductive use of a discourse employed in this way and helps to identify and elaborate on related objectives through which conflict and deep-seated division might be better grasped and transcendence effected.

In a striking original contribution to the literature on the role and practice of reconciliation in Northern Ireland Norman Porter has elaborated at length as to how prioritising this objective serves to acknowledge less clearly defined aspects of seeking to resolve conflicts which extend beyond or necessarily complement the full reach of justice or rights to encompass the need to promote forgiveness, apology and shame.¹¹ To dismiss this as a soft or unnecessary part of the politics of addressing division and conflict, so Porter argues, is to neglect crucial aspects of relationships which transpire between groups and results in the promotion of solutions which are either overly procedural or simply too limited. Neither does the prioritisation of reconciliation fail to recognise that politics frequently involves hard headed bargaining and the play of coldly calculating interest. The objection raised, however, is that if this is all that politics constitutes then all are ultimately demeaned in the process.

The potential power of reconciliation is undermined and ultimately neutralised if it is assumed that what is being demanded is a balanced compromise between contending interests which can be easily reduced to a technical challenge to be solved by the careful manoeuvring and efficient management of the parties concerned. Presented in this way, where the squaring of interests takes precedence over the evaluation of those factors which have set conflict in motion, the sources of division are only likely to remain intact. The pursuit of a more thorough-going reconciliation process appears that much more nuanced and demanding than this interpretation would suggest.

A normative reading of what reconciliation entails places an emphasis on pursuing non-instrumental practices which involve what Porter describes as the act of embrace and engagement.¹² In this context, the act of embrace seeks to acknowledge the interdependency between those who may nevertheless be different whilst engagement is characterised by honest and committed encounters with others, particularly among those with whom disagreement has occurred. In so doing, risk is entertained and a sense of vulnerability frequently entailed as each is exposed to the critical gaze of the other. In the process the virtues of magnanimity, forgiveness and reasonableness need to find an appropriate place.

In the absence of this strong conception of what reconciliation demands, it remains difficult to imagine how horizons might be expanded in such a way as to encourage recognition that the reality perceived from the position occupied, is not

the only possible valid one. It is also difficult to conceive of the successful cultivation of a shared sense of belonging and a common set of shared commitments which, whilst offering due recognition to difference, bind a common citizenry together. To interpret reconciliation and its objectives in this way does not imply a vision of a future society in which contradictions have been eradicated or tensions abated, but what it does anticipate are the grounds upon which a common space can be occupied and from within which fair interaction can proceed. It is a refusal to accept fatalistically the normalised space of division and distance, a common characteristic of societies which have experienced inter-ethnic conflict.

Judged against this vision of what the transition towards a reconciled society demands, the peoples of Northern Ireland have some considerable distance still to travel. During the course of the 'Peace Process', professed attitudes to reconciliation have frequently been directed towards outsiders in order to project the appearance of commitment in order to promote self-interest. In doing so, responsibilities for the difficulties encountered in embracing either the letter or the spirit of the Belfast Agreement are conveniently displaced onto others. Whilst the rhetoric of reconciliation is articulated, considerable energy is expended in order to ensure that when blame is eventually apportioned it becomes the recognised possession of others. A common feature of much party political manoeuvring, more general attitudes, emotions and dispositions militate against reconciliation's ambition. Indifference is forthcoming from many of those who have successfully insulated themselves from the worst consequences of the conflict. Whilst others, many of whom have experienced the conflict in a very direct and personal way, find the demands of forgiveness too great and bitterness ensues.

It is perhaps fear which is the most widely felt and variously experienced emotion that remains a pervasive impediment on reconciliation's intent. Fear, commonly expressed in relation to the potential consequences which might flow from its surrender or the fear of being subject to domination; of conceding too much to the other or the deep fear of losing ontological security in a new world of risk and uncertainty.

Northern Ireland remains a place within which fear remains an important component of ethno-sectarian logic which dictates the felt need to promote a complex series of boundaries, both discursive and physical between localised communities and thus narrowing horizons, promoting exclusivity and delivering a meagre life-world. So, whilst peace of a sort has been delivered and new power-sharing institutions have, at last, come to life, the task of reconciliation and the difficult demands it undoubtedly brings, remain to be prioritised. Whilst peace has been declared, the North is hardly at peace with itself.

A Cautionary Tale for Cyprus

It is advisable to avoid offering strict parallels between either the form or nature of inter-ethnic conflicts around the globe. The texture of the disputation, its dynamic and trajectory, as well as those conditions arising out of history or competing political projects pursued require careful attention to detail and a very cautious approach to generalisation. That aside, there appear to be correspondences, family resemblances between many conflict zones. Unequal access to resources, fractious minority/majority relations, the attendant politics of fear and the struggle for recognition suggest a set of commonalities which bind together rather than imply distance and radical difference.

Those familiar with the Cyprus problem can undoubtedly experience a sense of familiarity with the consequences of fear, isolation, ethnicised space and the imposition of internal homogenisation within respective communities. Others might identify a dominant discourse and related practices which place considerable weight on proceduralism, state-centric conflict resolution and the crude attempt to balance contending interests identified in the case of Northern Ireland.

As a consequence, considerable energy has been expended and will continue to be expended on achieving a just and viable 'solution' but with little imagination or practical political will or the necessary resources to pursue the ideal of a reconciled society once that 'solution' has been reached. There appears a wide gulf between well meaning yet small scale intercommunity projects funded by the international community and the grand designs promoted for the establishment of a functional state architecture of the ideal solution. In the space between there appears very little evidence of the desire to pursue the objective of reconciliation, to explore a grounded process through which the possibility of engagement, reciprocity and embrace might materialise.

The 'solution' to the Cyprus problem remains invariably framed as a state-centric problem to be addressed through the creation of a new political dispensation, power sharing institutions and reconvened international relations. In the absence of a felt need to promote such practices or cultivate the will to carry them through it remains difficult to predict that Cyprus will become a reconciled society anytime soon.

Notes

1. Each of these quotes figured prominently in the press coverage provided by British and Irish newspapers on the day following the Stormont event.

2. As is common in ethno-national disputes the origin of the current conflict is an object of dispute. Some accounts specify the killing of a Catholic barman, Peter Ward, on a street off the Shankill Road in loyalist West Belfast by the Ulster Volunteer Force in 1966 as appropriate. Others point to the gathering violence surrounding the Civil Rights campaign in 1968 or the curfew imposed on nationalist West Belfast the following year as other alternatives.
3. Northern Ireland's second city is frequently named differently depending on your ethnic origin or political disposition. Unionists and loyalists adhere to its official name which invokes an historic connection with the Corporation of London whilst Nationalists and Republicans tend to refer only to Derry. To signal this conflict and complication Derry/Londonderry is also referred to as Stroke City.
4. When being tempted to offer comparisons between Northern Ireland and elsewhere it is important to bear in mind that, in terms of its political institutions, Northern Ireland was never a separate state but a form of devolved governance within the United Kingdom.
5. McGuinness has always denied, and continues to do so, his membership of the PIRA's Army Council. However, perhaps the most authoritative account of the organisation, Ed Maloney's *A Secret History of the IRA* (2002) London, Penguin, not only names him as a member since the mid 1970s but as the Army Council's Chair throughout much of the 'Peace Process' (see pages 378-379). Maloney has yet to face any serious legal challenge to this assertion.
6. The SDLP was, for many years, labelled as a 'constitutional nationalist party' since, whilst advocating the end of partition, it repudiated the use of violence and abided by the rules of the British political process. Historically, a clear separation was made between it and 'physical force republicanism' epitomised by Sinn Fein and the PIRA. A clear distinction between these two political tendencies is now of course less easy to perceive.
7. The name of the Agreement is also variously given according to ethnic origin or political orientation. Republicans and nationalists tend to favour the appellation 'Good Friday Agreement' whilst unionists and loyalists tend towards the 'Belfast Agreement'.
8. See Torney, K 'Peaceline plan for integrated primary' *Belfast Telegraph*, 23 May, 2007 at [<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/education/article2574383.ece>], accessed 26 May 2007.
9. Shirlow, P. and Murtagh, B. (2006) *Belfast: Segregation, Violence and the City*. London, Pluto Press, pp. 59-60.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
11. Porter, N. (2003) *The Elusive Quest: Reconciliation in Northern Ireland*. Belfast, Northern Ireland, Blackstaff Press.
12. See Porter (2003), pp. 103-111.

RECONCILIATION AND SOCIAL ACTION IN CYPRUS: CITIZENS' INERTIA AND THE PROTRACTED STATE OF LIMBO

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Abstract

This paper will attempt to chart a normative framework for action for a social politics of reconciliation via a course for citizens' action across the ethnic divide of Cyprus. It will attempt to consider the context and content of reconciliation in Cyprus at this time and examine the various 'routes' to reconciliation, in terms of locating their theoretical, philosophical and ethical points of reference. Whilst 'reconciliation' is something that normally takes place after a settlement, the groundwork (conceptual, political and societal) needs to begin whenever the potential is there: the protracted state of limbo that characterises the Cyprus problem as well as the opening of the checkpoints in April 2003 make the ideas of rapprochement, reconciliation and cooperation realisable en mass immediately. Also, the idea of 'anchoring' the reconciliation processes to the specific context of Cyprus is essential if the project is to survive, expand and be legitimised in the eyes of 'ordinary' people, institutions and political forces. The paper aims to locate the possible common threads that permeate the various 'routes'; whilst at the same time it locates the limits and boundaries of 'common' elements. Moreover, the paper attempts to 'demystify' and deconstruct the concept in terms of the potential for 'transformation' of this particular ethno-national conflict. In this, we need to appreciate (a) the multi-dimensionality of ethno-national conflict within class-divided societies which manifest themselves in tandem with other contestations and (b) evaluate the processes by which ideas about 'reconciliation' become hegemonic, the role of social forces and the state(s). The paper then examines the potential for action by citizens and examines the tension within the concepts of citizenship, community, ethnos/nation and any project of 'reconciliation'.

Introduction: The State We are In

The paper poses a series of questions which are best understood as 'aporias' to be addressed at the level of theory but above all at the level of praxis – as challenges for action to shake off citizens' inertia – that results from the uninspiring times we live in and the events we have witnessed of late. (a) Can we speak of reconciliation

before a 'solution' during the current impasse? (b) Can there be a 'common thread' between the religious and the non-religious agendas of 'reconciliation'? (c) Are there any 'new spaces' for action for citizens via social movements and initiatives, parallel to the usual political initiatives? (d) Can we speak of 'social politics' that will meet and challenge the 'ethno-communal' boundary to pave the way for a trans-ethnic and trans-communal politics of citizenship? (e) Can protest politics overcome the ethnic divide and meet the 'ethic of reconciliation' as Sitas (2004a, 2007) defines it, to transform the 'dialectic of intolerance' into a new climate of dialogue and understanding? (f) Can we go beyond Cypriot and 'European universalism' that is not to use "the rhetoric of power", as Wallerstein (2006) calls it, in order to reconstruct a 'Cypriot version of a "universal universalism" (Wallerstein, 2006) that is properly anchored in the local but sufficiently ecumenical, open, anti-racist and internationalist capable of uniting without subordinating?

Before we enter this debate this paper will first attempt to define the current post-Annan, post-accession era. When we are speaking about the potential for reconciliation, the definite point of rupture is 23 April 2003, when the first check point at Ledra Palace was opened. In fact the opening of the checkpoint crossings moved the experience of reconciliation to a different level, qualitatively and quantitatively speaking, from that of politically engineered and socially exclusive encounters, to something tangible, live and potentially a mass phenomenon with the promise of societal transformation (see Trimikliniotis, 2003b). Yet, following the referenda of April 2004 a strong sense of disappointment and disillusionment made reconciliation a difficult affair. We can begin to theorise this encounter by reference to an 'aleatory materialism' of an 'underground current' in a 'glocalised' Cypriot popular context. This paper attempts to consider the potential for reconciliation in the post-Annan and post-accession era, when the political climate of Cyprus seems to have temporarily 'stabilised' without a settlement in what we can refer to as an uneasy sense of 'unsettlement'. There is no immediate solution to the Cyprus problem in sight, but there are important changes taking place around us as witnessed in the contradictions, contestations and possible actor transformations that may well be precursors to regional and local transformations:

Firstly, in Turkey, the showdown between Erdogan's AKP and the Kemalist army is a crucial development for the future of Turkey's accession, its internal reform and of course the Cyprus problem. The rekindling of the 'Kurdish question' with the danger of Turkish army incursions in northern Iraq is fermenting a nationalistic climate in Turkey and strengthens the hand of the 'deep state' and the army in Ankara. However, this is an internal power-struggle that is causing unease in the region and its outcome will influence not only the geopolitical agenda but also the ideological and political forces in the region and beyond: Anagnostopolou's ambivalent assessment that Turkey is perhaps entering a stage of democratic

“coming of age” is an interpretation worth taking seriously.² In any case, the current EU ambivalence over Turkey’s accession to the EU, especially after the election of Sarkozy in the French Presidency, is in turn creating more uncertainty and instability in Turkey and potentially may undermine the prospects for utilising the accession process to achieve progress in the Cyprus problem. This period can be perceived as a ‘negative’ time for reconciliation, rapprochement and reunification, because it puts matters on hold.

Secondly, we have what might be termed a sense of Cypriot ‘Euro-disappointment’ after the accession of a divided Cyprus to the EU:³ neither of the two communities has managed to alter the ‘power equilibrium’ to its advantage at the expense of the other via the EU. In this sense the so-called “European solution” to the Cyprus problem, proposed as an alternative to the Annan plan, has proved to be a failure. The apparent break down of the Greek-Cypriot policies of diplomatic recognition games via protocol as well as the legalistic routes with masses of court action at Strasburg⁴ is generating further disappointment. With a maximalist approach of trying to bury the Annan plan, the Greek-Cypriot side has isolated itself in the EU and managed to lose its European allies. It is no coincidence that by 2006 they resorted to the so-called ‘Campari process’: at best this is a mere technocratic management of a slow process of ‘Twain-ization’ of the unrecognised ‘TRNC’. In turn the Turkish-Cypriot side, instead of charting a route towards rapprochement and reconciliation, and possibly having lost patience and thinking they can cash in on the ‘Yes’ vote, is engaged in a war of words and nerves, which frustrates and irritates ordinary Greek Cypriots by allowing for rapid economic development at the expense of Greek-Cypriot properties.

Thirdly, for the first time since the opening of the checkpoints we have evidence of certain negative predispositions creeping in on both sides, which is beginning to take a more racialised form. We have witnessed a racist attack on Turkish-Cypriot students at the English school in November 2006, plus other racist incidents, i.e. neo-Nazis such as EFEN, Chrysi Avgi and Grey Wolves marching on the streets of Nicosia. A continuation of the current impasse generates fodder for such phenomena. Nevertheless, there are also interesting initiatives of resistance to the nationalist/racist upsurge that cannot be ignored.⁵

Finally, the Greek-Cypriot elections in February 2008 are fuelling a new dynamism in politics in the south, as the ‘underground contest’ between the ‘soft no’ and ‘hard no’ (see Trimikliniotes, 2006a) has now manifested itself as a political rupture with the decision of AKEL to support Demitris Christofias as the candidate for the Left. The rank and file of the party have overwhelmingly backed their General Secretary rather than Tassos Papadopoulos and the insistence of DIKO and EDEK to support Papadopoulos to run for a second term has resulted in the dissolution of

the ruling alliance, which has governed since 2003. This is forging a new atmosphere in the debate on the future of Cyprus, in both the south and the north, irrespective of the final outcome (see Trimikliniotis, 2007c).

Can We Speak of Reconciliation During the Current Impasse?

The referendum results are correctly viewed as a blockage to any prospect for a settlement and, at least in the short term, they block any prospect for a societal reconciliation. As a direct vote of ordinary people who expressed their will, it was the overall majority who voted 'No' from the Greek-Cypriot community, irrespective of whether the Greek-Cypriot political leadership called upon the people to reject the plan, that made the qualitative dimension of the current impasse quite distinct from previous ones. This is one issue that should be fully appreciated by peace, reunification and reconciliation activists and actors.

The Cypriot situation is hardly 'ordinary': it is in fact best described in the terms of Agamben (2005) as a permanent 'state of exception' par excellence.⁶ In this particular 'state of exception', the need to elaborate a 'civic' 'sociality' by active citizens or 'actizens' to initiate actions from below may well complement and kick-start a 'social politics of protest' as a normative tool-kit. Given that the impasse may last a long time, which means that partitionism is likely to become entrenched deeper by the day, it is suggested that there ought to be a 'rethink' of how to create conditions for the citizens of both communities to get together and draw on different traditions that may play a role in such action; to engage in serious dialogue as to what the goals of such action might be. 'Reconciliation' is the concept it should aim to examine and it should do so by considering a set of aporias as the potential, the content and the method of getting there.⁷ Can we really speak of reconciliation before a solution? Can we speak of reconciliation in the current climate, when we are witnessing the forces of divergence and partition consolidating their grip on our societies? The answer is both conceptual and conjunctural. At a conceptual level we should consider the theorisation of processes and experiences from other countries and observe the lessons we can draw from them. At a conjunctural level, we need to analyse the current political situation in Cyprus to ascertain how a process of reconciliation is to be achieved, and we should thus begin with the latter.

The prolonged state of limbo; this 'protracted stalemate', 'phoney war' of an 'unsettled' situation is manifesting an atmosphere of unease. It seems so difficult and 'unique' after the results of the referenda in 2004. A 'check-mate' composed by a Greek-Cypriot 'No' and a Turkish-Cypriot 'Yes' blocks the future as we appear to be stuck in a time warp. We are often reminded of the referendum result, which appears to confirm our worst fears of the opposing 'visions' turned nightmares for both of the island's communities. The current impasse situation may not be a

'unique' Sartrean 'Hois Clos' (No Exit) as it first appears. We have been in this situation before. In fact Cyprus experienced a stalemate decades earlier. In 1987, in the days of the 1980s stalemate, the late Kutlu Adali, a Cypriot writer and journalist asked:

"Is it possible to think of lasting peace in a divided country? ... Is it possible to arrive at lasting peace while [on] both sides of the country, each and every day, the flames of war are fanned by the seeds of destruction that are sowed because of national celebrations?"⁸

Adali had no problem answering without any hesitation in the affirmative. Today we pose the same question, albeit in a more differentiated international and regional environment. In this sense the debate has 'moved on'. We have a unique opportunity which was not available before, even though, as the various opinion surveys show,⁹ there is general disappointment regarding the prospect of a settlement. This sounds paradoxical as one would assume that if there is hostility and scepticism about the prospects of solution, there is logically hostility towards 'reconciliation' which can be interpreted as 'reconciling oneself with partitionism and the legitimization of the barbed wire'. However, this does not seem to be the case. A number of indicators as well as very different types of studies to be discussed indicate that whilst there is an increase in the sense of insecurity and 'phobia' within both communities and a 'hardening' of opinion as to the chance of a solution in the near future, one of the few areas where there is clear support, is for reconciliation. We can observe a kind of 'soul-searching' emerging; a rethinking and reflexivity over the prospect of a reconciliation commission to be set up and a need to revise the way the two sides evaluate the past. In support of this, this paper refers to research findings as to why Cypriots at this particular point of impasse seek reconciliation when there is no immediate prospect of the solution essential for any meaningful reconciliatory process to take place.

A study directed by Ari Sitas on the prospects of reconciliation, co-existence and forgiveness in Cyprus illustrates this point (see Sitas and Latif, 2007). The study was conducted in 2005-2006 with qualitative and quantifiable themes consolidated into an open-ended and exploratory research schedule. It involved in-depth interviews which focused on the experiences, historical and contemporary, of two generations – 50 year olds who were in the prime of their youth in the early 1970s and their "children" who were born after 1974.¹⁰ Based on observations the only 'hard variables' that were found to be significant were class/stratification; ethnicity; gender; age; religion and refugee-status. In terms of the 'softer' and 'experiential variables' – what seemed very significant were consumption of cultural, media-linked and symbolic goods; educational experiences; civic involvement; contact with and exposure to cultural 'others' and traumatic experiences of war and

violence. The study argues that the distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' variables is important in sociological work. The 'hard' variables denote those situations that people can do very little about, i.e. they are born in or are defined by them. The 'soft' variables are experiential and involve degrees of choice, personality and social character. As for the prospect of reconciliation now, they find that:

"There is a strong opinion that the status quo is preferable. To this can be added the opinion that the consequence of the An[n]an Plan's referendum is the cementing of the status quo and therefore, of "closure." This is not the majority opinion on either side of the divide. Most G/C and T/C especially those who have been affected directly by the harsh years, think that there are "openings" and that there are cracks in the cement of the current status quo. There are six:

- a. that substantive dialogue is possible between members and institutions and associations of civil society;
- b. there is an open-ness to some form of co-existence;
- c. there is an open-ness towards forgiving;
- d. there is a convergence about social norms;
- e. there is an open-ness to more economic co-operation;
- f. there is an open-ness towards a solution."

However on the crucial question of 'how soon?', their answer is rather pessimistic:

"Unfortunately, not very soon: there are serious concerns about security. Somehow, the status quo also does not seem to offer security but its abandonment is wracked by fears. Both women and youth tend to be less convinced about prospects. As long as women feel more insecure than men and as long as the youth is not committed to change, problems will arise in any process of changing. [...]

Any fast move at the same time will leave behind what is an inalienable insecurity: the insecurity of women on both sides of the divide, the primary home-makers and pillars of both societies. They are the most insecure on all aspects: from reconciliation, co-existence (especially so, on this crucial dimension) and forgiveness. It would also leave behind the most vulnerable sections of the existing working-class."

Another study conducted by social psychologists from the University of Cyprus, Panayiotis Stavrinos, Stelios Georgiou, and Katerina Christou (forthcoming) aimed to identify the fears and hopes that the people of the two Cypriot communities have towards coexistence and to examine their fears and hopes in relation to other social/psychological factors such as ideology, and national identity and demographic variables (gender, education, income).¹¹ The results of this study

show, as expected, that Greek Cypriots are more fearful and less hopeful towards coexistence as they seem less accommodating toward the idea of coexistence. Higher fears and lower hopes create a rather complex picture which needs to be understood. They pose a set of crucial questions which open up the debate around the question of reconciliation:

“What are the causal mechanisms of fears and hopes? Are they the result of personal and collective experiences? Our study shows a linear relationship between fears and hopes with age. That is, the older generations, with more out-group contact (prior to 1974 events) tend to be less fearful and more hopeful. This finding particularly is consistent with contact hypothesis (...) which suggests that the more the contact with the out-group the less the stereotypical approach takes place. Social and contextual parameters are also related to fears and hopes.”

They proceed to rationalise what their results illustrate and concur with the findings of Sitas and Latif (2007) to the extent that they also establish the explanatory links between the ‘hard variables’ (structures and institutions of society, ideology, class, religion etc.) to the ‘soft ones’ (contact etc). Moreover, their findings show that the need for reconciliation groundwork is essential if we are to move forward. In general people need to rise above their ‘fears’ in order to feel confident to take up the constructive risk of co-existence within a common federal state – particularly for those on the Right or the nationalist camps:

“Traditionally right-wing ideology is associated with nationalism and chauvinism. In our case, in both communities, this assumption seems also to be valid. People who identify themselves with right-wing politics tend to be more fearful and less hopeful. ... nationalism and conservatism are more likely to be indicators of a support for stagnation and the status quo rather than taking the risk of creating a common state and sharing power, geography and institutions. It is, therefore, likely to be the case that these people project to the out-group feelings that might not actually be real, but rather serve as rationalising their stand why things should not change.”

Finally, survey research that has been conducted since 2004 reveals strong indications that Cypriots are deeply concerned about the absence of a solution¹² and there is significant support for being critical and reflective on issues regarding the past and inter-communal killings. In an interesting survey, Lordos and Faiz (2005) with a sample of 1,000 persons from each community, discovered that more than 63 per cent of Greek-Cypriot and over 73 per cent of Turkish-Cypriot interviewees support the immediate forming and operation of a common Reconciliation Commission to record the common history of the Cyprus problem including the ethnic crimes committed during the past fifty years.¹³ This may appear

a somewhat surprising finding given that there is a hardening of general opinion to the prospect of an overall solution.¹⁴

The overall conclusion is that there is something about the particularity of the Cypriot context which requires that we look beyond the general schemas, i.e. 'first solution, then reconciliation' to consider how we utilise the unique situation we are in, where there has not been any serious inter-communal violence for some years. There is an opportunity for meeting and exchanging ideas and experiences but there is still no solution. Cypriot society on both sides of the divide seem ready to begin the long and painful process that requires a serious dialogue regarding the terms of the debate, the means and ends and how far it can be advanced given the current indefinite state of limbo.

**Locked in a De facto Partition:
An Impasse Riddled with Contradictions but with Potential for
Groundwork for Reconciliation**

In light of the above this paper sketches some basic considerations that should serve as the foundation for building the arguments on how to 'route' and 'anchor' the Cypriot road to reconciliation in its own traditions and socio-political and economic realities.

The opening of the checkpoints in 2003 allows us to meet, albeit in a controlled manner. Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots meet, exchange ideas, struggle, date, interact; many even work together. After the initial hype of the opening first days of the sealed borders since 1974, as well as the shock of the Referendum results in 2004, we now need to establish some sort of 'balanced' approach to the relations between the two communities (see Trimikiniotis, 2003a, 2003b, 2006a) so that Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots may begin to "see each other more clearly", as Loizos (1998) analysed.

Following the Greek-Cypriot 'No' and the Turkish-Cypriot 'Yes', and its aftermath, we may finally be able to shake off our idealised view, the mystical view for some and the demonised view for others. We may begin to rid ourselves of the distorted view of each other; we may view each other beyond the 'ethnic lenses'. The opening of the crossings contributed to the replacement of totalising discourses about the 'other' by individualising discourses.¹⁵ In any case, there are no angels; all sides have made past mistakes; some committed crimes and atrocities; but no community can claim to have 'clean hands'. It is time to de-communalise and 'disaggregate collective victimhood' as David Officer aptly reminded us'.¹⁶ In this context there is a strong case for engaging in a meaningful dialogue to properly understand one another and permit a sense of reconciliation that is appropriate to

our environment. This is not an easy process as social subjects often organise their collective existence and justify their political perceptions precisely 'around loss and sorrow', which are powerful conservative forces instead of leaving these behind. There is an effort 'to energetically retain the reasons which perpetuate these or even reinvent new ones as they fantasise that only in this way they can justify their existence' (Gavriilides, 2006). In Cyprus, 'memory' is organised and subordinated to the 'national cause' of the two opposing dominant nationalisms. Even the tragic and universally recognised issue of the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot missing persons has been used and abused by the two sides in a praxis of political 'mnisikanein', as Paul Sant Cassia (2005) has brilliantly shown: 'mnisikanein' is the Greek word for the practice of not letting go of the evil suffering of one's past and it is associated with a craving for revenge.

Memory, however, is politically organised. The role of the state via education attempts to organise memory according to its own interests and political expedience (see Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1990; Hobsbawm, 1990): hence the myth of the 'golden age' of 'peaceful coexistence' (see Kyrris, 1980). Interestingly even some 'Cypriotists' who are admittedly a fluid and complex group,¹⁷ construct their own memory of the past that emphasises harmony and peaceful coexistence, while it understates conflict. Whatever conflict remains admissible is attributed to foreign agency, leaving little room for taking responsibility for the past. This is the case particularly among Greek-Cypriot nationalists.

'Europe', this rather strange 'polity-creature', provides us with both an opportunity and a challenge – a danger even. Its very ambiguity in essence contains the traditions of global oppressor (Europe's colonial past; imperial role; racism and wars; and capitalistic nature) as well as the liberation ideals (labour struggles, democracy, human rights, multi-cultural traditions, emancipatory ideals and solidarity). How do we position ourselves and how do we create the spaces for a 'common belonging' that is open to both Greek and Turkish Cypriots alike? Moreover, how can a European Cypriot space be open to the non-Cypriot 'Other' in a way that is in-line with a non-racist, trans-ethnic and trans-national vision for the future? The presence of over 100,000 non-Cypriots, who work on the island cannot be ignored.

Nevertheless, it should be recognised that the complexity of the Cyprus conflict requires an appraisal of the various dimensions of a multi-dimensional problem. To speak of 'reconciliation' also requires a holistic approach at a diplomatic and political level as well as at an institutional and societal level. To speak of reconciliation from the point of view of citizens, which is the prime task of this paper, requires an awareness of other dimensions and approaches to the resolution of the problem. As analysed elsewhere (Trimikliniotis, 2000a, 2000b), the Cyprus problem

cannot be detached from the wider international issues that surround it; these issues form an integral part of the problem itself. It is precisely due to this reason that many sound analysts plus the majority of Cypriot political actors perceive the role of the 'international factor' to be crucial to the resolution of the problem (Attalides, 1979; Hitchens, 1997). The Cold War was a prime determining force in the fortunes of the people of Cyprus, as is the re-configured 'order' since. The involvement of the UN goes back to 1964 with the formation of UNFICYP (United Nations Force of Cyprus). The problem did not start in 1963, as projected in the Turkish-Cypriot official view, nor did it start in 1974, as perpetuated by the Greek-Cypriot official view – it was present with the emergence of the Cyprus Republic in 1960 and it passed through various phases and escalations.

Often the role of the 'international political actors' is invoked in Cypriot political discourse in different shapes such as 'foreign powers', 'the powerful of this world', and 'imperialism'. Views on the 'nature' of the problem vary. Two extreme positions are taken by those who perceive it solely as an 'ethnic conflict' between the two communities; and those who view it as an international conflict and consider the ethnic dimension as more or less a diversion from 'the real' issue. It has been correctly pointed out that the conflict in Cyprus cannot simply be seen as externally imposed nor is it merely a 'generic ethnic antagonism' (Anthias, 1987, pp. 187-188). The conflict is one of multiple levels.¹⁸

To understand the Cyprus problem involves the examination of some 'internal' dynamics and processes, such as class, ethnicity, power, and nationalism as well as 'external' (or adjacent) to the Cypriot State, such as international treaties, laws, interventions from other countries, in particular Greece, Turkey, Britain and NATO, which is under US hegemony; regional and world politics. The division between 'internal' and 'external' should never be viewed as rigid or as neatly demarcating these processes in reality. Attalides' study from the point of view of 'nationalism and international politics' provides a complex approach to the study of the problem(s) of Cyprus (Attalides, 1979), indeed "... the Cyprus problem represents a classic example of the interplay of domestic and international politics".¹⁹ The Cyprus problem then ought not to be perceived merely as a problem of irredentisms; we ought to understand it as a rather multi-faceted and multi-layered conflict, which encapsulates – especially since 1974 – a dispute among national States, as well as an 'ethnic conflict', in the 'nation-state dialectic' of Cyprus.

What are the implications of the above for 'reconciliation'? The very notion of 'reconciliation' must be properly adapted to the wider notion of attempting to overcome, and transcend the Cyprus problem. Reconciliation should thus be seen as an essential and integral part of the resolution, i.e. processes whereby the transformation of the conflict can occur, in which the driving force and defining

characteristics engender institutional and societal changes in attitudes, perceptions, and praxis.

The question of 'timing', i.e. whether it is possible to only speak of reconciliation in the narrow sense of a 'Commission for Truth and Reconciliation' (like the South African TRC) or the wider sense which takes a longer-term approach to social, cultural, psychological and political processes of reconciliation is crucial. However, there is a strong case for arguing that the processes ought to be discussed before a settlement, and initiatives should begin beforehand, but they can only be truly operational during and after a settlement.

We turn directly on the issue of reconciliation.

Which Truth? What Truth and Reconciliation?

The term 'reconciliation' became relevant to Cyprus via the Annan plan proposal for a Reconciliation Commission. Moreover, the interesting exchange in a public lecture by Aris Sitas (2004a) and Djelal Kadir (2004) soon after the referenda served as an introduction in the public discourse of the concepts of reconciliation in Cyprus. As a continuation of that debate it was proposed in a paper that the issue of truth and reconciliation in Cyprus ought to be approached in a way that draws upon both the international as well as the local struggles and traditions, in an effort to critically integrate the knowledge and experiences and allow for reflectivity.²⁰ The attempt was to briefly sketch the means, goals and ultimate objectives in a manner that is open-ended and non-exhaustive to contribute towards a debate on a subject that has not received due attention.²¹ The paper drew upon some of the debates over the South African 'Truth and Reconciliation Commission' (TRC) (see Asmal et. al., 1997; Gibson, 2004; Bronkhort, 1995) and elsewhere, where 'truth commissions' have been developed (Hayner, 2001) in order to locate a number of issues that are relevant in the case of Cyprus. The central concepts employed were those of 'anchoring', 'rooting' and 'embedding' issues to Cypriot traditions. The paper attempted to think through the initiative and referred to a number of preconditions for consideration, if the Cyprus 'Reconciliation Commission' is to succeed. Article 11 of the Foundational Agreement of the UN Plan refers to the creation of a 'Reconciliation Commission' that would be 'independent' and 'unbiased' and whose mandate would be 'to promote understanding, tolerance and mutual respect between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots'. It proposed a civic initiative that would lead to the logic of a Reconciliation process 'from below': the social foundations upon which such initiative would rest, if and when it could be launched. Three issues were raised:

- First, it is necessary to initiate an open democratic debate between and across, within and beyond the communities without 'fear' and prohibitions:

A debate whose terms will be set by a common will for 'reconciliation'. 'Truth', or anything nearing this very difficult and vastly loaded term, can only emerge if we have the eyes and ears to accept it and comfort it. Society must be ready for it; of course such a process cannot and will not engage everyone, certainly not everyone positively; there are likely to be reactions, denunciations and condemnation of such initiatives. It is crucial to bear in mind the fundamental ambiguity and contestation of the notion of 'truth', a debate that dates back to the arguments between Socrates and the Sophists about whether there can be 'objective truth'.

- Second, the Cyprus 'reconciliation' process must draw on international experience and accumulated knowledge by adapting the procedures processes and institutional frameworks to our own experiences in our own context. This ought not to be a mechanistic or dogmatic 'copy' but should elaborate and build upon the spirit, not the 'letter' of other experiences without fear. We need to engage with others, learn from civil society involvement abroad, and engage with peace activists, intellectuals and experts from Greece, Turkey²² and from every corner of the globe.
- Third, it is necessary to appreciate both (i) the institutions, processes, aims, successes and failures as well the historical contexts that shaped such initiatives elsewhere – from Chile to South Africa, and (ii) our specificities, our own context – which is no easy matter. The Cyprus problem is 'known' by Cypriots from their day of birth almost. They should engage with each other to be able to critically perceive it from different points of view, from different perspectives and properly compare it with other historical parallels. The author insists on anchoring it to personal experience because the project must acquire its own legitimacy to be successful. The Cyprus problem arouses a multi-layered and multi-dimensional effect on people and it is used and abused on a regular basis for different purposes (see Trimikliniotis, 2003a, 2005a, 2005b).

With regard to the question of 'anchoring' reconciliation to the Cypriot context, three historical traditions for peace action and reconciliation refer to:²³

- First and foremost, the historical common struggles of the Labour movement, which was named rapprochement. This by far contains the most powerful human memories and real social ties that keep the 'All-Trade Union Forum' going in spite of the centrifugal forces that want to pull it apart.
- Second, there is a tradition of cosmopolitan liberalism, which is rather weak, but nonetheless virtuous calls for tolerance and understanding emerged in Cyprus by 'Greek-Cypriot realists' in the 1960s after the inter-communal strife of 1963-1967 (see Attalides, 1979). This was connected to

popular beliefs of 'peaceful co-existence' and rural or village 'traditional life' (Trimikliniotis, 2000b).

- Third, there is a new tradition of new social movements and civil society organisations that emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s. These consist of social movements, women's groups, youth groups, students who studied abroad, conflict resolution groups, NGOs and 'activistic' initiatives. Finally, it is time for the social, economic, cultural, psychological as well as political foundations for the perceptions and practices of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot society to be considered in post-referendum Cyprus. Only if we study properly the shifts of opinions and the kinds of issues that concern the 'communities' at a communal, social, class, age, gender and individual level will we be able to decipher the course of action that needs to be taken for the purpose of understanding and developing the cause of reconciliation further.

As discussed earlier such studies are beginning to emerge. An opinion poll that shows support for the setting up of a reconciliation commission (as provided in the Annan plan) appears enthusiastic to rethink the way history is taught in schools. Perhaps there is room for reflexivity, critical thinking and social action after all.²⁴

Whose Reconciliation and What Kind of Reconciliation?

The concept of reconciliation itself is in question here. Essentially this is a political issue of strategic importance because it would determine the territory: What reconciliation? Whose reconciliation and between whom? Who is claiming the term and for what purpose?

In another context Anthias and Lloyd (2002) refer to the blurring of the boundaries between 'anti-racism', which had the connotations of 'vanguard action', of radical black activists, and 'multi-culturalism', which was viewed as the domain of 'soft' liberal perspectives. The contestation is about who claims what and how the projects are defined in combating racism in society. In a similar vein, the concept of 'reconciliation' in the context of Cyprus seems to be uncontested and equally disliked by both nationalists, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike. This is hardly surprising as their projects for ethnic purity are based on the denial of any space or belonging to the land of the 'Other'. It was possibly either ignored or frowned upon by the political Left for being 'too soft' or 'too liberal', or for failing to capture 'the imperialist dimension' of the Cyprus problem. Primarily, the Left appears to be disinterested in such concepts at this stage: reconciliation may seem like a 'diversion from the course of solution, as the Left has always referred to the need for rapprochement between the two communities'. It is thought that in the

context of Cyprus it is inappropriate because ‘Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots get on well and it is foreign powers that divide us’; The hostility towards US models is well-known; it may be considered to be merely another American style ‘conflict resolution gimmick’ that fails to appreciate the essence of the Cyprus problem, relegating the problem to mere generic ethnic antagonism between two groups.

Interestingly, even more ecumenical intellectuals such as the Cypriot academic Djelal Kadir felt that the very concept which claimed that ‘reconciliation’ is a term ‘historically and pragmatically inappropriate’ for Cyprus because it was “appropriated by the Hellenised Cyprus Republic” to realise the Greek-Cypriot hegemonic project:

“The command cohort of realpolitik on the Island of Cyprus has already compromised the term by making ‘reconciliation’ a sine qua non of any settlement. The current regime of the Hellenic Republic of Southern Cyprus insists on the whole island – north and south – RECONCILING itself to what they consider as certain historical realities, no matter [what] the legality or criminality of their genesis. This is at the heart of the obsession of the regime in Southern Cyprus with jurisprudential technicalities and legal protocols. These are compensatory gestures for the regime’s own questionable legality. RECONCILIATION, then, is a term that has been appropriated and corrupted by one of the interested parties to the conflict.”²⁵

Having rejected reconciliation altogether, Kadir proposes as an alternative ‘co-existence, distributive justice and co-governance’ and engages in an interesting critique of Sitas’ paper (2004a; 2004b; 2007).

This paper is of the view that the reasons given for opposing reconciliation are precisely the reasons why reconciliation is essential, and it is crucial to begin talking in these terms as a matter of urgency. Also the alternative concepts, which define a space, a discourse, an ideological formation, and an historical praxis cannot fully capture the very essence of reconciliation. As for the term co-existence, it strikes as odd that Kadir would prefer the term ‘co-existence’ without any ‘reconciling’ of the past or the present relations. Co-existence could mean separate co-existence, almost with no interaction at all: a wall in the middle can achieve the minimum of ‘co-existence’. It is no wonder that the term was invoked by separatists in the past. It is even more surprising, however, that this particular word be chosen given the fact that the term Peaceful Co-existence was the title of one of the best known clichés about the past relationship of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots.²⁶ This is not a claim to reify the past merely as a history of ‘ethnic antagonism since time immemorial’, hence operating as apologetics for the divisive status quo; nor that ‘we lived happily without any problems in the past’, with the obvious policy implication that we can (and indeed should) return to some ‘mythical status quo ante’ of

'peaceful co-existence'. The point is that Cypriots must actively engage with each other to define the terms and framework for taking responsibility about their common future.

'Conflict resolution' is a recent tradition in Cyprus. It has a respectable international scholarly literature on peace-building and theorising. In the Cyprus context, however, it prompts connotations of the experience at embassy workshops of, 'controlled environment', 'elite-based selectivity' or leadership activities that are viewed with implications by Cypriots. Moreover, its application to Cyprus has been poor and naïve (see Trimikliniotis, 2000a and 2000b). On the other hand, rapprochement, at least in its rather old formulaic and symbolic form, appears to have run its course. On certain occasions it may even appear to have reified its historical significance to almost becoming a kitsch term that relegates inter-communal relations, (i.e. real human relations with their 'ups' and 'downs') into some empty and frozen-in-time symbolic acts of superficial significance in the reality of open borders today. Rapprochement however, remains the major historic reference point that has flamed the operation of inter-communal solidarity as an educational and ideological antidote of ethno-communal irredentism, separatism and chauvinistic racism. Nothing can take that away as history is a major social force and living memories and education has produced identities of thousands of Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots alike, with their own martyrs, heroes and foes in what has for decades been the 'subaltern' history of Cyprus. The most significant section of society for the purposes of drawing support for peace and reunification comes from the historic Left, whose political and ideological education is ingrained with the notion of rapprochement and common struggles between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as mentioned above.

The argument of Sitas (2004a, 2007) is that reconciliation is essential for transformation of conflict, in transcending the 'ethno-communal' and 'ethno-national' divide. It is interesting to see the translation of the term in Greek. It is usually translated in two ways: either as *συμφιλίωση*, which is derived from *συν* [adjacent or connecting word] and *φιλία* [*philia*] which refers to the process of developing friendship, or as *συνδιαλλαγή*, which refers to a compromise or a point of 'rest'; a restoration of a friendly or harmonious relation; a return to calmness; even a coming to terms with something bad. The word is derived again from *συν* and *διαλλαγή* which means predisposition toward the spirit of compromising and consensus. The English verb to 'reconcile' refers to finding a mutually acceptable solution between two sides that were previously in conflict.

The view that "'truth' is a less pressing matter in the Cypriot context than it may be in parts of the world where wounds are more recent", whilst recognising the "need for closure for many who have lost loved ones and desire an accounting", is

controversial (see Kaymak in this volume). His argument that “the process of ascertaining reparations in the Cypriot context would prove divisive as the members of the respective communities would prefer a higher price for their particular grievances and the costs of such a process might prove too prohibitive for the economy” is something the author cannot agree with, although the case is cogent for stressing the ‘reconciliation’ element rather than the ‘truth’ element of the South African model. In other words, the investigation of the truth about the missing, tortured and murdered is not exhausted by the investigations of the ‘Committee for the Missing Persons’. This is a wider process of an historical enquiry into the individuals, institutions, material forces processes and ideologies which produced and reproduced such criminal practices (See San Cassia, 2005). Nevertheless, this paper would still be inclined to stress the ‘broader sense’ of reconciliation that allows a society to properly ‘move on’, to ‘re-imagine a united Cyprus’ and properly re-construct its Demos, to borrow Kaymak’s terms (Kaymak, 2005). This should be done, however, when the past has been dealt with and without losing the country’s ‘historical consciousness’ that is paramount to rebuild a ‘peoplehood’. This brings us to questions raised by Ahmet Hidiroglou (2005, 2006) about the need to develop a pan-Cypriot language for understanding one another, as the essence of a multi-cultural identity in the movement of building a new Cyprus for all. This paper agrees that the ‘Yes’ in the referendum is not enough, and the ‘No’ is not eternal. History did not end on 25 April 2004 with the counting of the results, as some would like us to believe. We can and must learn from the past. Indeed we have no choice if we are serious about reconciliation, reunification and peace.

It is not merely what does this or that term or concept mean at the level of generality or abstraction, but how it is defined, refined, shaped and anchored in political and social praxis. Can reconciliation capture the ‘popular imaginary’ to become a force to be reckoned with and play the catalytic role that it promises? What political and social forces will engage in the negotiation and the contestation as to the content, meaning and form of the ‘Cyprus reconciliation processes? What social forces (class, party, organisations, social or other movements and state intuitions) claim the concept? Depending on who claims it, the concept will be punctuated with the according orientation and content. So far, as we have demonstrated, no significant political force has ‘claimed’ it. This is why it is important to consider whether a civic initiative based on citizens’ activism and peace protest may be able to ‘take the lead’ at least in these early stages. This hardly means ‘defending the purity’ and ‘keeping it away’ from politicians and political engagement in general. On the contrary, this civic initiative must engage all actors for peace in society. The first one that comes to mind is the trade union movement, with its inter-communal ties; the ‘Platform this Country is Ours’ in the north; youth and women’s organisations; teachers and inter-communal intellectuals’ etc. The political process will follow: how does one engage the state and civil society? This

highlights the issue of the debate, State vs. NGOs. It is the view of the author that the perception of the processes of citizens' action should be 'totally autonomous' and somehow be 'sealed away' as problematic from the political parties. The argument that there is always something 'benign' and 'noble' in the NGO sector is just as naïve and misleading as the statist perspective which demonises NGOs as some sort of US plot.²⁷ In fact there are NGOs and NGOs, as there are political parties, initiatives and individuals of different calibre, aims, philosophies and practice: in the same way that every political party is not fascist, so every NGO is not an instrument of imperialism. The very concept of 'non-governmental organisation' expresses the non-specificity of this creature which is defined in negation or at least outside the Government (i.e. the State). It is a question of autonomy, a subject that Althusser (1969) discussed elaborately in his classic study of ideology in terms of 'relative autonomy' and elaborated further in the works of Poulantzas (1968, 1974, 1975 and 1980).²⁸ In any case, the point here is merely to touch upon a crucial issue that must be debated in the future as this is certainly a poor paradigm of the 'state', and as a result it is a very poor paradigm of the 'non-state actors' such as NGOs/CSOs (Civil Society Organisations), civic organisations and social movements.²⁹ We require a nuanced approach to 'civil society' that fully takes the particularities of each society into account (see Panayiotou, 1999, 2005; Constantinou, 2002, 2003a, 2003b; Trimikliniotis, 2003c, 2006a) if we are to be reflexive about social action for citizens in the direction of reconciliation. There is a significant civil society in Cyprus, albeit peculiar and subject to its own historical developments and structural constraints (see Panayiotou, 1999). The CIVICUS³⁰ study shows that as far as Greek-Cypriot society is concerned:

"the structure of civil society is considered 'slightly weak',³¹ [...] the environment in which civil society is located was judged as 'relatively enabling'³² and the extent to which civil society practices and promotes positive social values was considered 'relatively significant';³³ the impact of civil society on society at large was judged to be 'moderate'.³⁴"

In fact one of the areas where there is great room for improvement is inter-communal action:

"Bi-communal cooperation between Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, as well as citizen participation in bi-communal events, seems to be very limited, with 82 per cent of survey respondents saying that they had not participated in any kind of bi-communal activity during the last year. Furthermore, 57 per cent of civil society stakeholders who took part in a separate study said that less than 20 per cent of CSOs have participated in an activity jointly organised with a Turkish-Cypriot organisation. The few examples of bi-communal cooperation that do exist mostly involve cultural events, discussions, research, exhibitions and other similar events (Executive summary, p. 6)."

With reference to the structure of civil society in the Turkish-Cypriot community, the report notes that “apart from the huge mass demonstrations for and against the Annan Plan – civic participation in civil society remains limited.” It further states that “whereas a significant proportion of Turkish Cypriots belong to a CSO or may have undertaken some form of non-partisan political action, volunteerism, especially within civil society organisations (CSOs), is fairly low.” Participation in bi-communal events is reported to be “also low, although in this case the relative paucity of co-sponsored or organised events may be a contributing factor”. The report continues:

“Another challenge for a healthy structure of civil society is the exclusion of significant social groups such as minorities, poor people, and workers, if not ‘settlers’ from Turkey in CSOs. Women were equally represented in their level of involvement in CSOs; however, men predominantly hold leadership positions. During the time leading up to the referendum on the Annan Plan, support for the Plan was galvanised by ad hoc umbrella organisations. To the extent that these umbrella organisations exist, they have proven effective. A major inhibitor for the establishment of more formal umbrella organisations is legal constraints, since specific legal provisions for their establishment do not exist. Thus, aside from sports federations, which are numerous, such organisations are limited. Finally, inadequate levels of resources, be they financial, human or infrastructural, continue to hinder the development of civil society. Less problematic than usually assumed appears to be the environment in which civil society operates. Despite the presence of tens of thousands of troops from mainland Turkey, as well.”

Civil society is intimately connected to the particular nation state formation in Cyprus and the question of nationalism. We are dealing with highly complex phenomena: nationalism takes different shapes and forms and manages to transform itself. The role of the media is crucial in the shaping of public opinion, and nationalist ideology is a major distorting force. Nationalism as a political ideology (Hobsbawm, 1990) and ‘a theory of political legitimacy which requires that ethnic boundaries should not cut across political ones’ (Gellner, 1983, p. 1) is a major force in history. Whether ‘ethnic’, ‘civil’ or ‘cultural’ nationalism is an exclusivist ideology, see Balibar (1991). Interestingly, in the 1960s, Greek-Cypriot nationalists treated the Cyprus constitution with disgust as the Greek-Cypriot nationalists did the Annan plan in 2004: the Annan plan, was demonised and exorcised like a foreign plot disaster intending to impose foreign interest on the will of the Cypriot people, i.e. the majority who are Greek Cypriots, ignoring the fact that the Turkish Cypriots are their equals (Christophorou, 2005). Of course the 1960s and 1970s are quite different from today’s world, even if there are still powerful imperial forces around. The context is different but nationalism tends to totalise, and a-historicise, and makes all sorts of connections. After all, there is something of an inherent totalitarianism in any notion of ‘the nation’, be it the Greek or Turkish nation, or indeed the specific

'national communities' (Milios, 2007). Therefore, when discussing reconciliation in Cyprus we must be aware that even the 'new' or 'post-national' formation or 'multi-ethnic Cypriotness' may well generate its own exclusionary and totalitarian forces. Anthias and Yuval-Davis' (1983; 1992) formulation is highly relevant here: 'whenever there is a delineation of boundaries, forces of exclusion are set in motion'.

Reconciliation: A 'Novel' Politics of Protest?

Having considered some issues regarding the nature of Cypriot civil society in the context of a divided society, we turn to the question of trying to anchor or root reconciliation or however we term the societal process of dealing with the past and the future based on cooperation and understanding. The central issue when considering potential social politics of reconciliation as a civic initiative is to evaluate the role of mass organisations. The trails or marks of labour struggles and the political shadow of the 'other scene' are there and this is an issue that requires special reflection, without of course transforming it into a kind of sectarian labourist perspective in search of some misguided 'class purity'. When thinking about reconciliation we cannot ignore the class issues involved in terms of the orientation and the kind of commonalities being looked for. There are, of course, alternative routes to reconciliation, but to ignore the labour dimension is to eliminate a most powerful force, that has not fully exercised its power.

What is the role of 'ordinary people', as social actors, in order to arouse motivation in the reconciliation process in Cyprus? It is a theoretical response to a very practical question, an 'activistic' question that involves popular participation on an everyday basis, in promoting reconciliation as a novel 'politics of protest', to quote the peace activist Reuver Kaminer (1996). This allows for theoretical intervention, not as a 'deus ex machina' from one's 'Olympian throne', but more akin to 'organic intellectuals', to use Antonio Gramsci's conception (1972), whereby 'intellectuals' are identified as carriers and articulators of politics, within a movement, particularly for the 'subaltern' groups in building the 'counter hegemony'.

Any notion of 'politics of protest' is intimately connected to the question of citizenship and power; in other words how one understands citizenship and directs popular participation/action. Although this paper critically approaches with caution such notions as 'citizenship', particularly those conceptions that entail a sort of 'celebratory' tone, of the 'happy and bubbly culture' variety that assume that individuals are all totally free and equal, this paper instead advocates a notion of 'citizenship' that is reformulated to take into account the differentials in power, wealth, class, gender, race etc. When it comes to peace initiatives, particularly whereby 'the politics of protest' take the form of anti-nationalism and/or anti-

partitionism, the concept of 'Cypriot citizenship' is extremely fruitful or at least it can be. On a normative level what this paper suggests are anti-nationalist peace politics that contains certain key elements:

First, it is anti-nationalist – challenging the various kinds of stereotypes that were and still are produced from the divided and historically opposing allegiances to 'national projects', historically deriving from both 'Enosis' and 'Taksim'. The recent debates over 'the right to difference', multi-culturalism and the experience of European anti-racism are crucial points of reference. In the context of Cyprus it also signifies some sort of federal arrangement. But this is not enough.

Second, it builds on the notion of Cypriot independence, building on the historic legacy of anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, drawing on 'third worldist' approaches on the one hand and the notion of 'popular sovereignty' on the other. This can act as a basis for unity between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Here it needs to open up even further to cover non-Cypriot migrants (see Trimikliniotis, 1999, 2007a).

The third pillar is connected to the social struggles and the notion of equality. The question of class, gender and power is connected to the struggle for a peaceful and united (federal) Cyprus. Historically, the labour struggles are a central reference point for the 'tradition' of peaceful coexistence, whereby class is able to transcend 'national' or 'ethnic barriers' (see Attalides, 1979; Katsiaounis, 2000). In any event from the 1970s it has been shown very convincingly that this has been the case. Anthias and Ayres (1978, 1983) have illustrated that:

“... ethnicity can be seen to have the ability to articulate different ideological discourses and to represent different class political interests” (Anthias and Ayres, 1983, p. 65).

Some of these elements were articulated at times, and with varying degrees of success and consistency, in the case of Cyprus.³⁵ This is an aspect that shows the potential for linking the so-called 'ethnic' and/or 'national' to the social. Moreover, the argument of this paper takes a step further: class has the potential of bypassing or articulating beyond ethnic division. It thus offers a vision as well as the 'transformation programme' that is capable of articulating a new kind of politics with the capacity to mobilise people from both communities in order to achieve it. This was alluded to by many writers of the immediate post-1974 literature, but it was never taken up properly in terms of a protest politics (Kitromilides, 1977, 1979; Markides, 1977; Anthias and Ayres, 1978, 1983).

Meaning, Content, Essence: Alternative Routes to Reconciliation

This paper contends that there are multiple paths to reconciliation and peace. The key is to attempt to coordinate the alternative traditions and not fuse or subordinate them into a single 'ideology', but to attempt to understand the position each one stems from. The importance of the Left is where the author springs from. This has been developed elsewhere (Trimikliniotis, 2000a, 2000b, 2006a). This paper will next try to engage with the theoretical, ethical and religious links of the subject.

It may be observed that there is something 'religious' in the ethical origins of reconciliation which atheists or agnostics may find questionable. However, the concept of reconciliation is embedded within every religion or non-religious, ethical, moral and philosophical outlook, albeit in different shapes, intensity, importance and centrality. In the same way that conflict and contest, historically speaking, is present in all structures of society, 'reconciliation' equally attempts to partially seek 'order' and calm in conflict situations. In this sense there are elements of it everywhere.

Christian Routes of Meeting the 'Other'

In Christian theology it seems the 'doctrine' of reconciliation is no peripheral matter. According to Karl Barth, it is via 'the work of reconciliation' that 'the covenant is fulfilled' and this is at 'the heart of the subject matter of Christian faith' (Barth, 2004, pp. 3-4). It is no coincidence that it was Desmond Tutu who became the personification of the TRC, insisting that 'God has a Dream' and whose vision is so deeply ingrained in Christian convictions (Tutu, 2004). In the case of Cyprus, the Orthodox version of the Christian doctrine has been taken up by the Bishop of Morphou. His preaching of love and reconciliation, peace and reunification has put him ahead of other church (and indeed political) leaders.

The notion of covenant can be traced back to the Old Testament as 'morally grounded pacts with God'. It served as the basis of the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation³⁶ right through to modern liberation theology, the 'civil rights movement' and Desmond Tutu's Christian 'Rainbow-ism'. The stress placed on individual responsibility, free will and equality before God is the basis of activism for peace, democracy, human rights and anti-oppression and anti-poverty. In Tutu's terms 'God has a Dream' – this serves as the basis for existence, a source of strength, inspiration and hope for the achievement of a better world: reconciliation is the route to the achievement of the divine Dream (Tutu, 2004).

The Orthodox Christian tradition is quite different from other Christian traditions. It is based on the communion of persons before God; there is no notion of 'the

individual' in the original Greek Canonical texts. The individual (άτομο) is a modern insertion that is derived from modern liberal and constitutional thought in the context of individual human rights. The biblical reference – apparently the person, (πρόσωπο) hence the route to reconciliation – is necessarily a different one from that of Christian reformist denominations. 'Free will' is of course central to each person's route to Theosis (Θέωση), the union with God in a mystical sense, via his/her total devotion of serving the deeper essence of existence: serving the divine aims of Love (Αγάπη), totally and unconditionally. The emphasis, however, is on the personal relationship between (hu)Man and God as mediated through personal relations among persons in a communal arrangement, which are necessary but not enough to satisfy the kingdom of Heaven.³⁷

The Bishop of Morphou, Neofytos, is undoubtedly the most articulate and forward-looking advocate of reconciliation, whose point of reference is the Orthodox Christian doctrine as interpreted by an ecumenical, multicultural and multi-faith perspective of tolerant and peaceful co-existence. Whenever possible, the Bishop loses no opportunity to preach on the need for reconciliation, co-existence, respect, tolerance and love for the 'Other' as the 'essence of Christianity': Nationalism is thus declared to be 'a sin'.³⁸ He calls upon priests and imams to 'become the bridges upon which Cypriots will reunite';³⁹ he invokes Apostle Paul, Ayios Ioannis the Theologian or Ayios Ioannis Sinaitis, as well as Jean-Paul Sartre and calls upon religious leaders to make 'the robe (cloth worn by clergy) into a flag of reconciliation, co-existence, peace and forgiveness';⁴⁰ he is in regular contact with local imams in the region of his Bishopric, as well as ordinary Turkish Cypriots, with whom he has developed an unprecedented rapport. The author has witnessed this on several occasions. Europe has become an important point of reference; however, the Bishop does not naively invoke uncritically some Europeaness as though it is an 'unqualified human good'. On the contrary, he articulates the case for an open multi-cultural and multi-faith Europe that Cypriots, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots can and must join:

"Europe, which at some point wanted to conquer the diversity of other people with the Crusades or Colonisation, has reached a point today that is attempting to [become] a group that overcomes national differences. It was mediated of course by a process that lasted for centuries and has passed from many negotiations which were painful, and many times, bloody.

After two world wars, after Fascism and Nazism, Europe today is attempting to build a unity that overcomes national differences and conflicts ... All of this effort is governed by the idea that wants Europe to be a multi-cultural space ... [where] different cultures, languages and attitudes, different religious beliefs co-exist ...".⁴¹

He does not have any delusions about the current state of affairs and the gap between declarations and the harsh reality of everydayness across Europe:

“Some could however consider that this still remains an idea, since in reality there are still national differences, as well as phenomena such as xenophobia, racism and discrimination against minorities.

Such a critique is indeed valid. However what is important is that the European Union has formed a framework of principles, of values. It has a clear aim: to achieve a synthesis via diversity. The extent to which this is achieved depends, to a large degree, on the maturity of the societies of Europe and the citizens themselves. For the implementation of these principles [it] is not only an issue of laws and regulations, but it is a matter of will, political maturity. And a matter of spiritual maturity, I would say”.⁴²

He does not hesitate to grapple with the most difficult issues such as immigration, including calling on acceptance of ‘illegal’ migrants, the settlers issue and even commends the positive aspects of the Ottoman Empire for being multi-faith and multi-cultural.

In Orthodox Christianity, the societal frame of reference is a small-scale community of worshippers where relations remain inter-personal and not a large-scale society made up of anonymous individuals. It is no accident that the Greek word for ‘society’ (koinonia) also means ‘communion’. This fundamental difference in perception somehow coincides or at least brings to mind certain images of traditional communal society of the sociological distinction between societies that exhibit ‘mechanical’ as opposed to ‘organic’ solidarity (Durkheim), as well as the anthropological distinction between ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ societies (Levi-Strauss). Orthodox Christianity is a ‘personalistic’ and ‘communalistic’ religion.⁴³

This paper refers extensively to the discourse of the Bishop of Morphou, the youngest and perhaps most charismatic of all bishops, in the Weberian sense, to indicate that matters are changing after all. For a bishop to be able to speak in these terms, even if he does appear a maverick among other conservative, nationalistic church leaders, he does mark a new beginning. We may be able to communicate with this church, even though some reservations are retained as to the role of religion on the subject.

The Inherent Difficulties of a Religious Agenda for Reconciliation in Cyprus

There are inherent difficulties when attempting to advance via the religious route in the case of Cyprus, although it would be a mistake to consider that the religious

agenda for peace is somehow inferior or less important. On the contrary, given the historical importance of the Cyprus Orthodox church as the main vehicle for Greek-Cypriot irredentist nationalism, it would be an important boost to peace if the Church plays a constructive role in promoting peace, reconciliation and reunification, rather than rally conservative forces to 'defend the nation from the non-believer or Muslim 'Other' – especially when the role of the church today is diminishing in essence.

In the case of Cyprus, the fact that religion symbolises a divisive point between the ethnic communities creates all sorts of problems in attempting reconciliation via a 'religious agenda' (Sitas, 2004a). Moreover, the fact that there is a strong secular tradition, even an anti-religious tradition in large sections of the population, and in particular in the Turkish-Cypriot community, whose vast majority are agnostics, non-believers or plain atheists, makes any 'religious agenda' for reconciliation inherently problematic. Additionally, the current international climate of Islamophobia of Western countries following the September 11/2001 attacks makes a 'religious agenda' for secular, and non-religious masses of Cypriots and, in particular, Turkish Cypriots (suspicious of any re-invented 'religious revival'), extremely perplexing but also inherently problematic. If such an agenda is to emerge, it ought to attempt to cross cut the religious/faith boundaries. Derrida's effort to call a singular point of reference for Judaism, Christianity and Islam resulted in the term 'Abrahamist' (Derrida, 2001, p. 22). Derrida's formula was to invent an experimental term that would cross the Christian-Judaism-Islam divide. Forgiveness is an essential element of reconciliation and hence Derrida's formula may be useful for religious and non-religious agendas alike. The 'Abrahamist' tradition is for Derrida (*ibid.*, p. 28),

"complex and differentiated even con[f]lictual – is at once singular and on the way to universalisation though where [there is a] certain theatre of 'forgiveness' puts in place or brings to light."

Reconciliation requires a 'theatre' of forgiveness, (i.e. a space for the public performance of forgiveness). We are far from having such a 'theatre' at this moment in Cyprus. But is it possible to speak of this 'tradition'? What about the religious-secular divide? The answer remains ambivalent and doubtful but one may be open to persuasion.

Citizens, Communities and Subjects: Spaces for Reconciliation and Social Action

What is the potential for citizenship within the Cypriot context? 'Citizenship' has become a 'buzzword' in academic discourse over past years. Along with the shift away from 'structural' to the individual and the more personal aspects, it has come

to denote the potential, at least in theory, of the 'liberal dream', as first expressed in the French Revolution: 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité'. Furthermore, in the so-called 'post-modern' epoch of 'identity politics', it has come to express, in a somewhat transformed manner, the potential for popular participation within national, even supra-national structures, hence the notion of 'global citizen', 'European Citizen' etc. There are, however, inherent tensions within the concept and context it operates that cannot be ignored. Nonetheless, this paper will subsequently argue that once subjected to a critique of its underlying (liberal) assumptions, the concept of citizenship has a radical potential that could and should encapsulate the notion of the 'social' potential. Taking into account the wider conflicts, on the basis of class, ethnicity and gender, the concept is a useful tool in the 'transformation', rather than 'resolution' of ethnic conflict and overcoming the ethnic/national barriers that may exist in society. The example of Cyprus illustrates the above, as the 'production' of an ethnically divided Cypriot citizen served to reinforce and perpetuate the conflict over the Cyprus Republic. In the context of trying to re-unite Cyprus on a federal basis, the concept of 'citizenship' is of pivotal importance. Citizenship can play a key role in demolishing the barriers erected over the years of conflict. While the processes of 'globalisation' and 'Europeanization' are taking place, it allows for differences, respect and tolerance; simultaneously drawing on all those that unite, in the wider context of the social struggles for equality, development, popular participation and the process of 'democratisation' in society.

It is possible to distinguish different Weberian 'ideal types' of citizenship that derive from different traditions and have different class politics (although they may well draw upon cross-class support). We schematize the two basic positions of the role of citizens, the liberal democratic model and the Marxist critique. The 'conservative' approach is part of the liberal-democratic model, but accepts the basic rules of the capitalist game/exploitative relations. Stuart Hall and David Held (1989, p. 175) usefully distinguish between what they call 'citizenship's three leading elements such as (a) membership, (b) rights and duties and (c) real and participatory rights'. The same writers' critiques of liberal notions of citizenship are as follows:

1. The extent to which individuals under capitalism are actually 'free' is highly questionable. It is the social conditions that shape the conditions within which one is able to exercise his or her 'freedom'.
2. The very definition of 'freedom' itself also defines how 'rights' are understood. The 'New Right', for example, is only concerned with defining the parameters of isolated individuals in market places and refuses to consider any concept of social rights. Or, on the other side, if we take another extreme example, we can see how the neo-fascist British National Party invokes in its political discourse the so-called 'rights for whites', but

the selectivity and one-sidedness of 'rights' is the subject of another paper (Trimikliniotis, 2007b).

3. On the one hand, negative definitions of citizenship show how illusory and irrelevant rights can be for most people and how, on the other hand, citizenship rights reflect the current state of affairs and the status quo in society.⁴⁴

The above criticisms should not be taken to mean that the notion of citizenship should be rejected altogether. On the contrary, we are obliged to think and rethink the concept and extend it to make the concept fit the purpose of action – a politics of citizens' action that transcends the traditional middle-class underpinnings, is grounded in Cypriot experience and encompasses an all-embracing activist-based programme for inclusion and participatory democracy in the context of building the climate for peace and reconciliation and thus overcoming and countering the nationalistic hegemony in both communities.

Inevitably, the 'politics of reconciliation' is intrinsically related to collective and individual rights in the specific arrangements of polities. This issue was raised by Balibar (2002, p. 17) in a different context when referring to European citizenship and the proposal to adopt the 'European Constitution' across the EU:

"The issue is to decide what kind of status and rights (civil, political and social) the inhabitants of this new political entity would individually and collectively enjoy".

The framework for Cyprus is the formula of bi-zonal, bi-communal federation and we know that it will be based on the UN plan (re-negotiated and fine-tuned in a manner that will address the concerns of both sides). We ought, however, to move beyond the diplomatic arena and begin to use imagination, something our society has not been used to doing in the past, as Kaymak (2005) aptly points out; the popular imaginary as well as 'sociological imagination' (to use Mills' expression) must go beyond the 'diplomatic straightjacket'. This is why we should attempt to deconstruct the notion of 'citizenship' and disconnect it from its 'communal' umbilical chord. The Cyprus context of subordinated Citizenship to 'Community' should at last be questioned, not in a way that satisfies neither hegemonic majoritarianism (i.e. the Greek-Cypriot nationalistic project that displaced Enosis),⁴⁵ nor ethno-communal unilateralism (i.e. the Turkish-Cypriot nationalistic project that displaced Taksim).⁴⁶

We can begin to connect theoretically the relation between citizenship and community in the specific context of Cyprus. Balibar (2002, p. x) aptly points out that,

“‘Community’ and ‘citizenship’ have had a problematic relationship since the origins of political thought. (The Greeks had only one word to express the[s]e two aspects: politeia, whence we derive our ‘politics’ as well as our ‘police’. But this meant that the contradictions were located within this single concept, and conferred on it an immediately ‘dialectical’ meaning.)”

An attempt to redefine both ‘citizenship’ and political ‘community’ is proposed: to make citizenship trans-communal as argued elsewhere (see Trimikliniotis, 2000a; 2003a, 2003b, 2005a) and create a notion of a ‘social imaginary’ (Castoriades, 1975, 1994) without an ‘imagined community’, i.e. articulating the idea in a manner that exceeds both ethno-communal ‘Community’ (as defined by the Cyprus Constitution) as well as national citizenship itself. These are not, however, straight-forward matters; they are by definition contradictory, transitional and ambiguous, but absolutely essential for social and political action. Balibar (2002, p. x) vigorously defends this politics of community and citizenship, and rightly so:

“I defend the idea that the contradictory nature of notion of political community (which requires both unity and diversity, conflict and consent, integration and exclusion, substantial identity and openness to indefinite change) reflects a tension not only between the real and the ideal, or between the self-assertion and deconstruction of community as such – or the opposite requirement of ‘identification’ and ‘disidentification’. My thesis is that democratic politics is a difficult, ‘ambiguous’ art of combining the opposed terms of identification and disidentification (including identification with the universal), and for that reason it remains permanently exposed to turning into its opposite.”

This matter brings us to the fundamental issue addressed here – citizenship and reconciliation. Since citizenship in the Republic of Cyprus has been construed as communal, a total ethno-communal fixity of identifying exclusively with one community and only via this community are citizenship rights realised and exercised, we ought to locate a course of action that does not pass through this problematic relation. We may reinvent a novel public sphere, a modus operandi and ‘rules of engagement’ that ‘inject’ each of the communities with enough energy to ‘overflow’, from one into the other so that the questioning and the challenge of ethno-communalism takes place and a new mutuality and reciprocity begins – whether it be projects on history and the past, or education and geography; environmental issues or resource management; gender politics etc. Above all the notion of reconciliation requires that both communities engage in an attempt to imagine a community without a communal centre and hence go beyond the ethnic community: we can then stretch out the community boundaries to define a new territory of trans-communal citizenship that is meaningful and opens up spaces for action.

Dead End Note and Beyond

With the accession to the EU, one finds a constant re-emergence of the European dimension within Cypriot politics. This requires us to think about the effects of Europeanization on reconciliation, which is often constructed as the opening of a sphere of belonging to both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Aris Sitas refers to 'a third space' (Sitas, 2004a, 2007), but this is not universally accepted as Kadir (2005) points out. This paper does not share his perspective, it is well known that from the beginning of the 'European course' of Cyprus' accession to the EU this expression by the Greek-Cypriot politicians was justified in political terms, of acting as 'a catalyst for solution' whilst opposed by Turkish-Cypriot partitionists. Nevertheless, today under Talat, the Turkish-Cypriot leadership's claims to 'Europeanness' are equal to that of the Greek-Cypriot claims and this creates an emerging interesting situation, even if the 'neutrality' of this 'third space' is somehow distorted as both 'official' sides contest for the EU's favour. There is a common point of reference and the EU could become more of a 'broker' and an acceptable point of reference for both sides – in parallel always to the UN. Some on the Greek-Cypriot extreme Right refer to the EU as an alternative to the UN, but they cannot be taken seriously. Europeanism remains an ambivalent and contested reference point and as such it requires a clear strategy so that the 'exclusionary' elements remain in check and the 'commonalities' between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriots are developed.⁴⁷

We are still left with the practical issues, the processes and procedural matters that could materialise reconciliation into a socio-political force within its own right. A force that might draw political groups, individuals, citizens, 'denizens' (i.e. not full citizens), Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots into a new politics of protest and reconciliation. A politics that should not conceal or avoid conflictual issues and contentious points of debate or, historically speaking, dark points in history such as taboos – but, a politics that might open up spaces for debate, exchange and genuine reconciliation. A reconciliation that could at least lead to a 'simpiliosis' of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots; that might transform the ethnic into a social so that the other struggles could continue.

For Sitas (2004a), although in the end there is no middle route, he does recognise that in spite of contextual differences between Cyprus and South Africa, they have to choose 'the logic of reconciliation or the logic of fragmentation'. There is, however, a possible third route: the infinite perpetuation of the current state of limbo. In these conditions Sitas, understandably to some extent, states that 'you cannot have reconciliation without a solution first (a just solution which is 'functional' and 'viable' that is). He continues to expound that we cannot have a solution because 'people are not ready for it'; and people may eventually be 'reconciled' to

the fact that there is no reconciliation and no solution. But then again there may be a way out for actizens. Irrespective of the theoretical origin, the concept of reconciliation is essential if we are to secure any form of 'resolution', 'settlement', 'transformation' or solution to the Cyprus problem. 'Reconciliation' must be debated, developed and legitimised by the Cypriots before and after a settlement. Even if there is no settlement in the immediate future, or the current impasse continues indefinitely into the future, it is essential that the process of reconciliation begins. There is a special role for those people involved in articulating the case for settlement and peace, to also speak out in terms of reconciliation. The 'organic' and 'traditional' intellectuals, as Gramsci (1972) puts it, have a special role in this mission.

In the current state of affairs, what can ordinary citizens do? How can ordinary people go beyond the stalemate by creating spaces, modes of action and engage in processes that generate cooperation and potentially common institutions? How can popular energy be channelled into a force for reconciliation, mutual understanding and reunification? We can state with certainty that the potential for cooperation and understanding has not been fully realised and the will of a trans-communal community that overcomes community barriers has not been activated yet. Of course this requires a vision for the future that is not some nostalgic 'restoration of an imagined golden age' which can somehow be brought back to life by 'reverting back' to the naïve perceptions of what it means to be a 'true Cypriot'. All nationalistic projects and ideologies ought to be dissected. The 'majoritarian' hegemonic traditions of Greek Cypriots either disguised as implied Hellenised Cypriotism, or others based on perceptions derived from the old notions of self-determination, (i.e. simple majority decision-making) as well as the various partitionist bi-communalisms which are variants of ethno-national communalism, must be rejected. The ideological search for transcending such arrangements that go much further in the direction of achieving a 'universal universalism', to use Wallerstein's concept, and synthesise and respect particularism but equally accept solidarity in a truly internationalist perspective, is most imperative for Cyprus. This paper is less inclined to borrow Held's 'cosmopolitan democracy' (Held, 1995), as Erol Kaymak (2005) does,⁴⁸ but prefers the concept of 'multi-ethnic' or 'trans-ethnic citizenship' or 'actizenship'. This is perhaps the direction for critical thinking, social action and political engagement. Such processes ought not to be seen as alternatives to the historical social and political institutions; rather they are best perceived as operating in parallel with them, both within and beyond mass organisations such as trade unions, youth and women's organisation movements and NGOs. In short, anything that captures the imagination of the people to enhance the struggle for a common reunited society and federal state cannot but be activated.

- * I would like to thank the two anonymous referees who reviewed this paper for their constructive comments. Also I would like to thank Andreas Panayiotou for his critical comments.

Notes

1. Drawing and adapting the Althusserian somehow enigmatic but vastly imaginative work on 'The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter' see Althusser, 2006.
2. Sia Anagnostopoulou «Η Τουρκία σε κρίση ή σε φάση μιας δραματικής 'ενηλικίωσης'», Sunday Avgi (Κυριακάτικη Αυγή), 20 May 2007.
3. This is supported also by various opinion polls and the Eurobarometer after the initial enthusiastic support for EU accession.
4. The case *Xenides-Arestis vs. Turkey* (application no. 46347/99) represents an example of the ECHR using its authority to resolve hundreds of disputes in a mass-claims process: the court awarded damages in line with the celebrated *Loizidou* case. See: [[http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/moi/PIO/PIO.nsf/All/CF3E836BC3F3336EC2256DC300799C23/\\$file/European%20Court%20of%20Human%20Rights.pdf?OpenElement](http://www.cyprus.gov.cy/moi/PIO/PIO.nsf/All/CF3E836BC3F3336EC2256DC300799C23/$file/European%20Court%20of%20Human%20Rights.pdf?OpenElement)], but both sides are trying to interpret the decision, with Greek-Cypriots arguing that the decision requires an effective remedy of restoration of properties and compensation for the loss of use, while the Turkish press is arguing that the case affirms the use of an internal compensation commission within the 'TRNC' to resolve the claims. It seems that fear of 'floodgates' has resulted in the Court tending to recognise the compensation board that may put an end to the thousands of potential Greek-Cypriot cases going to Strasbourg. Arestis involved the deprivation of property rights as a result of the continuing division of Cyprus and the Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus. Arestis is a Greek Cypriot who lives in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. She owns land, houses and a shop in northern Cyprus but has been prevented from living in her home or using her property since August 1974 as a result of the continuing division of Cyprus.
5. See *Περιπέτειες Ιδεών* τ. 8, Πολίτης, 31 December 2006.
6. The notion of 'state of exception' or 'state of emergency' in the context of Cyprus was advanced in a number of papers by the current author such as «Δημοκρατία και Πολίτες στον 21ον Αιώνα: Η Κυπριακή Πολιτότητα Ενάντια στον Αυταρχικό Κρατισμό», Πανεπιστήμιο του Πολίτη, Intercollege, 7 December 2006.
7. I would like to thank Avishai Ehrlich for his comments and his insight into the issues of conflict, war and reconciliation.
8. Adali, a journalist for the daily newspaper *Yenidüzen*, was murdered on 6 July 1996. He used his column to oppose the division of Cyprus. The excerpt is taken from an article published in 1987 and quoted in a tribute to his life 9 July 1998 (published in *Parikiaki*, London, 14 July 1998).
9. Opinion shifts were discussed in Trimikliniotis (2006b).
10. The study consisted of 170 interviews with 100 persons aged 50 years; 50 of the

generation of their children. Using the principle of “complementarity” and “proportionality”, an equal number of Greek and Turkish Cypriots, of Men and Women and of Refugees/Non-Refugees were interviewed.

11. The participants incorporated 409 Cypriots (231 Greek Cypriots and 178 Turkish Cypriots) randomly selected from both urban and rural areas of the island.
12. The latest study, carried out on behalf of IKME by NOVERNA in May 2007 with 804 interviewees and 6 focus groups, shows that over 50 per cent of Greek-Cypriots are concerned about non-solution, and as time goes by the matter is likely to worsen.
13. See Φιλελεύθερος 2 July 2006 and ‘Building Trust’ [www.cyprusopolls.org], p. 32.
14. This was the subject of a Seminar organised by RECONCILIATION and KADEM which examined ‘Recent Developments in the North: Shifts in Public Opinion?’, Muharrem Faiz on the Turkish-Cypriot public opinion and Nicos Trimikliniotis on the Greek-Cypriot opinion, under the general title ‘The Divergent Tendencies in the Two Communities and the Prospects for Solution’ Limassol 12 May 2006.
15. This posed a threat to the legitimacy of views expressed by the nationalist media and may explain the unease with which G/C journalists reported people’s accounts of their individual experiences in the north. I would like to thank Marios Sarris for pointing out this issue.
16. Seminar titled, Truth: The Road to Reconciliation? An Analysis of the Model and its Implementation in Countries with a History of Violent Conflict, organised by the Forum for Inter-communal Dialogue for Active Citizens for Peace in Cyprus and the Neo-Cypriot Association, 4 December 2004, Goethe Institute, Nicosia.
17. Some research has been carried out on Cypriotism such as Panayiotou, 1996, 1999, 2005; Peristianis, 1994; Mavratsas, 1998; Papadakis, 1993; Trimikliniotis, 2000a. In general it refers to various categories – Greek-Cypriot people who supported independence and rapprochement with Turkish-Cypriot people, who were the first to point to the massacres of Turkish Cypriots in 1963 and in general refused to claim ‘nationhood’ or use the term ‘nation’. Social scientists have preferred to use the term “Cypriotists” and “Cyprocentric”, which is juxtaposed to “Grecocentric” and “Turcocentric” illustrating their differentiated views from their ‘national-oriented’ opponents and the fluidity of the category. I would like to thank Andreas Panayiotou for pointing out that there should be a more nuanced approach to Cypriotism.
18. Hitchens (1997, p. 158), refers to four main but related questions of which the Cyprus problem consists: 1) The relationship between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots; 2) The long-standing differences between the states of Greece and Turkey; 3) The time factor – Hitchens was writing during the Cold War period; (today this would mean the politics of the ‘New World Order’); 4) The place factor (the regional strategic importance of the island).
19. Coufoudakis, 1993, p. 41.
20. In December 2004, a few months after the referenda, a paper was presented which covered these issues and it was then elaborated further in Trimikliniotis (2004).
21. The Greek paper is called «Αλήθεια, Ποια Συμφιλίωση; Βειώνοντας την ‘Αλήθεια και συμφιλίωση’ στο Δικό μας Απαρτχάιντ».

22. A number of other ethical questions were also raised such as (a) Can we have true reconciliation without 'justice'? (b) Can we have reconciliation without trust and all the consequences of this (i.e. punishment of the culprits)? (c) Are the people ready to face the 'truth' when for years they were blocked from knowing and thinking? (d) Truth, but whose truth? It is here that we are forced to go back to the debate, between Socrates and the Sophists: Is truth objective and subjective? (e) Does the 'truth' (or truths – the question is better left open) lead to reconciliation and tolerance?
23. The questions were raised in Nicos Trimikliniotis (2000a, 2000b).
24. See Timikliniotis (2006a) for a critical review on perceptions on reflexivity, critical thinking and social action in the context of Cypriot civil society.
25. An updated and elaborated version of his original paper is published as a commentary article in this issue of The Cyprus Review (see Kadir, 2007). Interestingly, even in his UNESCO lecture Kadir (2004) avoided the term and used different terms.
26. The book *Peaceful Coexistence in Cyprus under the British Rule (1878-1959) and After Independence*, by historian Costas Kyrris, was published and distributed freely by the Cyprus Republic PIO in 1977.
27. A classic example of this is the Turkish-Cypriot journalist Sener Levent in numerous articles in the newspapers *Afrika* and *Politis*.
28. Of course the context and problematic of the time was not about NGOs but about the questions of class struggle, the party and the capitalist state.
29. The issue of NGOs and the state is elaborated in Trimikliniotis, 2003b. Recently Petras and Veltemeyer, 2001, argued that at least in the Latin American context "NGOs are at the service of imperialism".
30. CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report for Cyprus – Executive Summary *An Assessment of Civil Society in Cyprus, A Map for the Future*, 2005. We are informed that "due to the de facto division of the island and the segregation of the Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities, it was necessary to undertake two separate studies. The two project teams (Intercollege for the southern part and the Management Centre of the Mediterranean for the northern part of Cyprus), followed the same methodology and the implementation of each project stage was conducted in parallel." The study for the Greek-Cypriot community was carried out by Stathis Mavros and by Erol Kaymak for the Turkish Cypriot society.
31. The results of the scores given by the PAG are portrayed in a diagram, plotting the scores for the four dimensions: structure, environment, values and impact. The highest possible score was three and the lowest possible score was zero. As far as structure is concerned it is given a score of 1.3.
32. It is given a score of 2.1.
33. It is given a score of 1.9.
34. It is given a score of 1.8.
35. Katsiaounis (2000) notes that the Left in Cyprus, KKK, AKEL and 'the popular movement' was not only a social movement that had no 'national element', as Attalides (1986) seems to be implying in an important paper on political parties in Cyprus but it was at the forefront of the struggles for national self-determination of Cyprus.

36. Elazar, D.J. (1998) *Covenant and Constitutionalism, the Great Frontiers and the Matrix of Federal Democracy*, Vol. 3, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers.
37. I would like to thank Marios Sarris for the clarifications of this point.
38. Interview with the Turkish-Cypriot journalist and writer Sevgul Uludag, *Yeni Duzen*, 17 April 2003. He publicly condemned nationalism invoking the relevant decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchy of Constantinople in the nineteenth century.
39. Speech at Ayios Mamas, Morphou, 1 September 2004.
40. Interview for Greek-Cypriot newspaper *Alitheia*, 21 April 2005.
41. Bishop of Morphou «Διαφορετικότητα και Ταυτότητα» [“Diversity/Difference and Identity”], Part A, *Alitheia*, 29 July 2005.
42. *Ibid.*
43. I would like to thank Marios Sarris for showing me this dimension of Orthodox Christianity.
44. The famous quote by Anatole France is indicative: “The law in its majestic equality gives every man, prince and pauper alike, an equal right to sleep under the bridge and eat at the Ritz” (quoted by Hall and Held 1989, p. 178).
45. This is the ‘new’ Greek-Cypriot nationalism that aims to ‘reintegrate’ the Turkish Cypriots in the Republic and tacitly reduce their status merely to that of a ‘minority’.
46. This is the ‘new’ Turkish-Cypriot nationalism that focuses on ‘economic autonomy’, ‘direct’ or ‘free trade’ – ‘European representation with no ties with the Greek Cypriots’ etc.
47. The issue of Europeanization has been a critical issue and is increasingly dominating the literature on Cyprus (see Theophylactou, 1995; Trimikliniotis, 2001a, 2001b; Tocci, 2004).
48. For a critique of liberal cosmopolitanism see Trimikliniotis 2007b.

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Commentary Articles

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Truth and Reconciliation on Cyprus will be Possible, when ...

Djelal Kadir

Truth and reconciliation are powerful ideas. At the right time and under the appropriate circumstances, they can prove powerful indeed. Circumstantial appropriateness is important enough for Aristotle to have considered it on two different occasions (in the Rhetoric II and Nichomachean Ethics 1142a and ff). The most proper occasion for truth is when it can coincide with what might in fact be the case. When the facts are still in the process of being manufactured, the nature of truth remains vulnerable to those who shape the facts.

Reconciliation, like truth, becomes meaningful after the fact, and after the facts are no longer susceptible to those who are still engaged in creating facts and shaping the truth that corresponds to them. Reconciliation arrives in the aftermath of conflict and contested interests, when the agon is no longer paramount and the antagonists can no longer see greater benefit in competing for the manufacture of facts and truth. This is the moment when the protagonists find greater value in harmonising factuality, truth, and the concord between them than in shaping facts and truth to suit their own particular purposes. For this reason, and especially in the political arena, both truth and reconciliation can only be taken seriously in the aftermath of deeds already beyond the reach of political operatives, that is, beyond the stage of manipulation that created the need for the rediscovery of truth and made reconciliation necessary in the first place. This is not to say that either truth or deeds are ever immune, since what defines the polis is the perpetual adjudication of facts and truth through civil and civic discourse. This is the stage when civil society takes precedent over governmental operatives and state apparatus, since the most defining attribute of politicians is their capacity to overlook certain facts expediently, that is, as it suits their motives and self-interests – ideological, economic, or otherwise.

Truth and reconciliation, then, are never absolute. They are always negotiated, compromised, adjudicated. These adjudicatory processes can only occur after those in positions to command the nature of facts and truth have either moved on and away from the historical circumstances they have forged, or when they demonstrate a genuine commitment and honest intent to forego control of the facts and their attendant truths as they have manufactured them, a rare eventuality since those in control rarely surrender command willingly or altruistically. When time, circumstance, and history superannuate the grasp of those barnacled on the body

politic and the common weal, those who remain behind on the scene can indeed negotiate the facts, adjudicate truth, and reconcile the ledger of history. To attempt to achieve these goals even while the facts are still in the process of being constituted by those who have a vested interest in giving those facts a particular shape leaves truth vulnerable to being other than truthful and reconciliation other than conciliatory. Both truth and reconciliation in such untimely circumstances become a further opportunity for those interested in continuing to ensure for themselves the distortion of any truth and any conciliation so that they conform to their particular interests and ideological motives.

Reconciliation and truth commissions have proved apt for places such as South Africa, for example, precisely because those who shaped the facts and their truth approached obsolescence, or were marginalised from the national scene, or were obliged to relinquish control of fact-making and truth manufacturing by circumstances they could no longer determine or direct. Those who command the conditions and possibilities of facts and their truth, in other words, those who determine Realpolitik, especially in a circumscribed arena like the Island of Cyprus that approaches conditions of a laboratory control-group in a small terrain, tend to be rather nervous, not to say obsessive-compulsive in their diligent endeavours to manage circumstances and their Realpolitik. This is so because the size of their theatre of operation and the consistency of their modus operandi make them quite obvious and transparent to the scrutiny of anyone who would care to scrutinise or analyse them with any honest objectivity and historical insight. In other words, the political operatives, usually clever by half, are indeed clever enough to know that they are quite transparent in their machinations, hence, their paranoia and neurotic obsession with technicalities, legal and otherwise. Their only hope for any cover or cloak of immunity is the possibility that those who are in a position to engage in such scrutiny or analysis might share their ideological proclivities, prejudices, and vested interests.

In the case of the Island of Cyprus, the above dynamics become compounded, exacerbated, and intensified because of the small theatre for this agon and, not least, because there are multiple sets of operatives who would forge the shape of the facts, the nature of truth, and the possibilities of any reconciliation. Because the same operatives who created the facts on the ground, the truths that pertain to them, and the need for conciliation among peoples they have set into conflict continue in power. Thus, any truth and reconciliation can only become realised in ways that conform to their historical vision, ideological inclinations, and economic self-interest.

When speaking of truth and reconciliation it is imperative to be truthful. The truth of the matter is that "Cyprus" is now multiple, *de facto* partitioned into two entities, and each only refers to the other and addresses the other in quotation marks.

Another term for “quotation marks” is “scare quotes”, a term that is most appropriate to the current circumstances. Scary indeed, for at least one more generation of Cypriots seems destined to know neither truth, nor reconciliation by virtue of the fact that, let us be honest, the “Turkish Republic of North Cyprus” is daily more Turkified, just as the “Hellenic Republic of Southern Cyprus” is daily more Hellenised. The “international community”, that expedient chimaera that confers the fiction of recognition and ontological authority on one or another political entity now and then, is itself befuddled by what is what and who is who. Or it does not consider a limited phenomenon such as the island of Cyprus significant enough to bother engaging in an honest assessment of what is what and who is who. There is no indication that this might change any time soon, especially since politically engineered turgidity and obfuscated reality serve some very strong interests and reinforce some powerful atavistic prejudices on the island and in the “international community”. The reality of Cyprus outside of quotation marks or scare quotes, then, is little more than a mirage, product of the phantasmagoria of those whose neurosis have historically been most acute and their modus operandi most heinous.

Thus, under the current circumstances, “reconciliation” for the regime of the “Hellenic Republic of Southern Cyprus” translates into the whole island – north and south – reconciling itself to what the regime’s principals consider as unquestionable historical facts that they themselves have created. Given the derogations and exemptions from jurisdiction under the exemptions of the EU *acquis* that exclude northern Cyprus from the purview of full southern sovereignty, to define “reconciliation” on terms pressed by the “internationally recognised part of the island” entails a performative contradiction. The only possible avoidance of such performative contradiction is the forestalling of any negotiation, in perpetuity if possible, since negotiation would mean having to concede the possibility that there might be other truths than those the current regime in southern Cyprus considers as the only reality, no matter the actual legality or historic criminality of the genesis of those facts and their truths. There is a fear of negotiation and adjudication and this explains the obsession of the regime in southern Cyprus with jurisprudential technicalities and legal protocols. These obsessions are compensatory gestures for the regime’s own self-perceived questionable legality or morality, since the principals who created the facts on the ground continue to be the same political operatives. Reconciliation, then, is a term that has been appropriated and corrupted by at least one of the interested parties to the conflict, and, in reaction, compromised just as much by the other, as well as by third parties with long-standing historical and strategic interests in the situation. In sum, to speak of truth and reconciliation at this moment on the island of Cyprus, more accurately, “Cyprus,” runs the risk of furnishing grist for the mill of political operatives whose self-interest in deepening the animadversion and antipathy between the very communities we would wish to reconcile remains unchanged.

What might the alternative be, if not now, then, perhaps in some as yet indeterminate future? I would suggest a triple formation: co-existence, distributive justice, co-governance. These are more than lexical formations, and they strike fear at the heart of the current regimes – south and north. There is nothing wrong with striking fear, especially when it is aimed at the mind of political operatives. If those who wish to further truth and reconciliation also wish to make any difference, they would want to reach the minds of both sets of governing elites and all their fairly homogenous political parties, even through fear. As pragmatic creatures, fear, especially fear of the possibility of truth they cannot shape and the fear of history they cannot control is what they are most likely to respond to. Shame would not work; politicians, by historical precedent, are beyond shame.

Peaceful co-existence is not utopian. It makes practical sense, and it is common sense, if indeed the diverse people of the island are ever to make common cause. The people of Cyprus have demonstrated time and again, even when they are emotionally hijacked in their votes, plebiscites, and referenda by self-serving politicians, that they are clearly well ahead of the governing structures and those holding the reins of power in the government and in the private sector's economic institutions. Those interested in peaceful co-existence must find a way – through the media (to the degree that the media can be rescued from servility to the regimes and their political parties), through international pressure, through sympathetic nodes within the governing structure itself – to pressure those who rule (under the present circumstances, they can not be said to be governing). Until such time as civil society and a civic community can become strong enough to enter the public arena with alternative voices to those of governmental structures, the ruling regimes will be under no obligation to make the interest of the greater number its priority. This is because such a re-ordering of priorities threatens their special interests, whether these be ideological, prejudicial, ethno-racial, or economic, or the convergence of all of these into the deadly cocktail that is, in fact, the “national” potion.

Because Cyprus is such a fractured “nation” with a limited geography and an overtly determined condensed history, the agora, the voice of its public sphere, has to overflow the geographical limits of the island. Cyprus is already saturated as a public arena by highly regimented ideological formations, by historical memory, and by economic interests that play the complete register of emotions and sentiments at the heart of ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and racial prejudices with exquisitely timed demagoguery. In human terms, the public sphere is hopelessly compromised, and this is most glaringly obvious in such international forums as the United Nations and the European Union, where such a little space as the island of Cyprus generates so much rancour and so much suspicion – some genuinely felt, some cynically cultivated by those who have a vested interest in people hating and fearing each other.

So, how does one get a larger public sphere as fulcrum, as Archimedean point when the point itself is already saturated? The only hope might be to reach for an international horizon, even at the risk of coinciding with the mantra of those who would prefer to have things remain just as they are presently, even if “international” might be taken to mean “European”. For those who are so inclined, this translates into an antithesis of “Asian” or “African”. In other words, to say “European” for them becomes a cloak of immunity for a certain racism against anyone they deem other than European, hence the obsession with “European solutions” and “European Union”.

Beyond this risky reflexive and expedient identification of international with “European”, international means multilateral; it means adherence to agreements, treaties, and protocols already historically sanctioned starting with the history of what was the Republic of Cyprus at its genesis as a prospective nation liberated from colonial rule. Adhering to such historically sensitive internationalism will mitigate the partisan and self-interested protocols, UN resolutions, and EU affiliations generated by the current regimes through political lobbying, economic extortion, and appeal to inherent ethnocentrism. If indeed truth be given its due in a discussion of truth and reconciliation, history obliges us to remember that the current government, despite the arguable facts of “international recognition”, is NOT the government of the Republic of Cyprus, but a “government of necessity”. It was made “necessary” because the legitimate government of the Republic of Cyprus was dismantled by one of the parties that displaced the legitimate government and that Republic. As such, the regime in southern Cyprus is only as legitimate as the regime in northern Cyprus, which also sees itself as “a government of necessity” made necessary by the actions of the southern area. Anyone seeking recognition on the basis of recognisable truth and credibility must be hard-nosed about historical accuracy, frightening though such realities should be to those who misshaped history to fit their purposes. If truth is to be the helpmate of reconciliation, truth’s historical accuracy must be paramount.

In the context of internationalism, it must be reiterated, “Europe” as noun and “European” as adjective, no matter what it modifies, in the particular context of Cyprus and as uttered by Greek Cypriot governmental operatives means “non-Asiatic”. As such, it is a racist lexicon deployed tactically when expedient to delegitimise anything non-Hellenic, to slur anything non-Christian, and to derogate anyone not of “European” racial stock, whatever that might be. Europe in general and the EU in particular might not understand this when they respond warmly every time someone in Cyprus speaks of a “European solution”, or they understand it very well indeed. And the Cypriots who use the term serve as convenient cover for those Europeans with racist predispositions.

It is also important to differentiate international from “global”. Globality’s homogenising impulses inevitably flow through the line of least resistance and greatest profitability. Global flows are neither discerning nor ethical, and certainly are not just. They follow political capital and capital interests. Capital interests are already well entrenched on the island, north and south, and both sides have been lobbying hard on a global scale to check the lobbying efforts of the other. If the goal of pursuing truth and reconciliation is to leverage fairness, justice, harmony, universal principles of ethics, these do not play on the stage of the global. They are, in fact, considered impediments and they are either harshly neutralised or patronisingly tolerated by globalists.

An international focus, or pursuit of an internationalist fulcrum for leveraging truth and reconciliation, when the appropriate time should come, does not mean reliance on hegemonic brokers, e.g. the USA, the UK, France, Germany, Russia, or China. This is because hegemonic players in Realpolitik are by definition self-interested and certainly not committed to the realities the people of Cyprus might value. Hegemons are interested not in reality, but what Machiavelli called “the reality effect”, which means the expedient and strategic “facts” that can be capitalised and leveraged to further their own agendas, not the goals of principled Cypriots in pursuit of truth and reconciliation. The regimes of control on the island are already fully cognisant of this. Their advocates and ambassadors are already covering this ground relentlessly with their lobbyists and travelling salesmen, though their credibility is by now frayed.

To go international in the pursuit of truth and reconciliation on the island, then, means to widen the public sphere through international organisations in civil society, not necessarily relying on governmental structures, though one cannot afford to rule them out either. The only effective instrument for bringing pressure on the saturated and already occupied public sphere on Cyprus is pressure from the outside – political pressure through the international media and NGOs, economic pressure through corporate foundations with philanthropic pretensions, multilateral pressure through human rights organizations. And politico-economic pressure through vital partners like Greece, Turkey, UK, and USA, whose attention is otherwise monopolised by government lobbies and official ambassadors and trade missions, but who, in their own self-interest, might also listen to more than they hear just from the governmental regimes on the island. Given their obduracy, one has no choice but to bypass the governmental structures on northern and southern Cyprus and go directly to the world, the world of official and civil-society. Meetings, symposia, workshops among those Cypriots interested in truth and reconciliation should take place off the island at highly visible and strategic places – the UN in New York, the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm, the EU ministries in Brussels and the Human Rights Court in Strasbourg, the Organisation of Islamic Countries headquarters

(there is something more than just comical to the fact that the Greek-Cypriot government tried to infiltrate one of their operatives in “the family picture” of the OIC two years ago!)

The idea of truth and reconciliation is most admirable. Dialogue among likeminded Cypriots from all the communities on the island who share this goal should be commended. But while dialogue is always good, even with the official regimes, if such efforts are to have any worldly consequence, the status quo must be moved beyond dialogue and into negotiation. And when governmental regimes and political operatives fail to engage in negotiation, those for whom peaceful co-existence is important must take upon themselves the responsibility of negotiating outside governmental agendas and at highly visible international venues. Those who consider truth and reconciliation important enough to be indispensable for arriving at peaceful co-existence must undertake the task of creating the circumstances in which the pursuit of truth and reconciliation will be appropriate. This might well mean creating a Cypriot government in exile as a model of what a truly national and all-inclusive government for the whole island, without quotation marks, could be. Being from a small space – an Island, – the Cypriots have perfected the gestures of conversation and the politesse of dialogue and handshakes. But what has been deftly and diligently avoided, and what is needed most, is negotiation, which means dealing with what is at stake and with actual realities on the table, not just as hypotheses and as topics of hypothetical conversation preparatory for possible future negotiations. The conversation must be moved to a point of, how much – where – when – whose – in what proportion – until when – how soon – with what guarantees? Then, the pleasant conversation can resume again, but it will have resumed after having done the necessary job. To get to that point, a point when truth and reconciliation will become possible and possibly meaningful, those truly committed to peaceful co-existence must vault over the current regimes that live in dread of actual negotiation.

The people genuinely interested in peaceful co-existence on the island of Cyprus must vault over Green Lines and Walls, whether derelict or demolished, actual or symbolic, and begin, at highly visible international sites, the negotiation process outside the governmentally framed channels and beyond the pre-packaged facts and truths the current regimes have manufactured and continue to manage. The next generation must be rescued from the neuroses and phobias of the current governing cohort, lest the poison of ethno-nationalist xenophobia and division perpetuates itself indefinitely.

Reconciliation and Transformation: Lessons from South Africa?

Ari Sitas

It was barely two weeks after the “Referendum” on the fate of the “Annan Plan” that Djelal Kadir and I shared a difficult platform in Nicosia created by the University of Cyprus. I must admit that on that evening we approached the theme from different angles: he, from the standpoint of an ecumenical scholar of literature and cultural formation; I, from the standpoint of a sociologist and a strategist. Both of us were born and raised on this island; both of us had been away for many years, but both of us quite naturally were deeply concerned about the prospects of redemption, resolution, reconciliation.

My contribution that evening titled “Beyond Racism: the Ethics of Reconciliation and the Reality of Reconciling”, tried to reflect on what lessons could be gleaned from the South African processes of transformation that might assist in the “post-Annan Plan” period. Djelal Kadir, circulated a response to this particular workshop that generously engaged and criticised some of my core ideas. It would be proper to engage with his critical insights.

What did I argue?

I firstly contextualised my South African experience as a scholar and as an anti-apartheid activist: I argued that the burden on my generation (black and white) in South Africa was to understand how a country could move from the brink of disaster towards reconciliation and peace, towards dismantling the last institutional vestige of racism and how a complex multi-ethnic society could reach symbiotic certainty through a substantive democracy. The negotiated revolution (as it has been called), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the country’s libertarian constitution have received wide recognition.

Could my imperfect experiences over there, make some sense over here?

I know that the South African experience is different from the experience and dilemmas that stare the people of Cyprus in the face. To be brief: the experience is different in five ways:

- There was in the South African “experience” a hierarchical and racial system of interdependence and exploitation – although whites and blacks lived in segregation and separation, white wealth was contingent on black

labour. Any polarisation struck at the heart of the country's socio-economic system. There is very little interdependence on this island and we can imagine a situation where the two communities exist and continue to exist separately for ever.

- The nationalism of the ANC, the leading force in the resistance period and the ruling party thereafter, was an open one – it was non-terminal, as it was based on a Freedom Charter that posited: “South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, etc.” Although African in its substance it was a non-racial African-ness that defined its domain of action. The dominant nationalisms on the island were and are terminal: Greek or Turkish, they involve an either “this” or “that.”
- The possibility of a negotiated settlement was predicated on the discovery of a “third space” through which two significant processes occurred: firstly, one could abstract from history and its bloodied memories where claims of belonging were non-reconcilable: the one population's land was the other population's pained expropriation. Such a third space allowed dialogue despite history. Secondly, it allowed for a consensus that the past was regrettable. Reconciliation, forgiveness, regret and ownership of the past was facilitated in South Africa through a third-space that was created by an alliance of Christian churches, and their black and white congregations. I do not see such a space between the mosque and the church here having gained much ground.
- The negotiations and settlement, the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the constitutional work, everything that was created, was an endogenous process with the “outside”, only lending a helping hand. There was no exogenous mediation, no Annan Plan and no European or African Union. South Africans did the messy and emotive work themselves.
- There was a realisation that violence as a means to an end, was leading nowhere, in fact it tended to destroy the very ends that it was supposed to be aiming at. It was brutalising society. Dialogue at all levels in hundreds of peace committees involving all civil society organisations became the methodology of dispute resolution. Despite serious new interactions on the island, such processes do not have statutory legitimacy.

So if the differences are so great, what can be made of the South African experience? Why should such exotic idiosyncrasies be entertained even for a moment? I will start by delineating how a politics of Reconciliation locates itself within broader historical concerns, before I explore its meaning in South Africa.

I therefore argued the following:

What we call modernity has reached its ultimate political limits in the United Nations – that is, in a parliament of sovereign nation-states and an abstract declaration of human rights. Our categories can rarely think beyond that. However critical we might want to be of both, we have to admit that they were noble attempts to validate a post-colonial and post-war reality and to protect people from authoritarian rule. To the careful social scientist the only judgement possible is that neither sovereignty as a principle nor a human rights planetary code have settled the historical questions over (what a poet friend has described as the questions of) “Land, Bones and Money”. I say this knowing that it was precisely the recognition of sovereignty that gave Greek Cypriots a sense of recompense and justice after the invasion; and that it was the “human rights” charter that gave black South Africa a sense of recompense and justice when Apartheid was declared a crime against humanity. But neither institution nor declaration solved the pressing, crushing problems.

What I called, “the ethics of reconciliation” have emerged from the cracks of the post-World War II status quo – they arose together with their opposite, the ethics of cultural relativism and fragmentation. The seemingly impossible situation of historical wounds, cultural entanglements and a sense of ethnic inequality have pressed consistently for the fragmentation of nation-states and the declaration of new states of independence. This process of fragmentation has been accelerated with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

As a contrast, or a counter-point, there has been, from the sources of the same disquiet, an impulse, faint at first, but becoming more persistent as the years rolled on, that another world was possible and from it, a serious commitment to solve the seemingly irreconcilable contradictions confronting our contemporary period. The impulse has emerged into an ethical conduct through two sources.

It arose from a critique of violence, militarization and of all final solutions. There have been hardly any examples since World War II where the use of force has led to a morally acceptable socio-political solution. Furthermore, any such violence undermined the fragile balance between equality and freedom and has led to permanent forms of vulnerability.

It also arose from the struggle to overcome racism and derogation in all its forms. Remember, racism and derogation has taken three forms: that the “other” for inherent and unchanging characteristics is seen as expendable, as a non-person: therefore such an “other” could be exterminated, annulled and/or chased away. Problem: those who were supposed not to exist under this schema, survived. And in many cases, those non-people however small their numbers in some instances, are making claims.

Racism's second form was that the "other" for inherent and unchanging characteristics is seen as usable: therefore, enslaved and/or put to use in colonial systems and in labour repressive economies. Problem: the useful non-person, the black, rebelled. Finally for similarly inherent characteristics the "other" is seen as a "non-us" and therefore excluded. (This form has increased through the abolition of formal slavery and institutions of racial domination). Problem: contemporary global entanglements and migrations have made it impossible to merely exclude.

History, Walter Benjamin argued, is always written from the perspective of the victor. But does history have final victories? Does the defeated and surplus "other" ever become extinguished? I do not think so. I see no historical evidence to the contrary. The Jews survived the holocaust, the Palestinians refuse to disappear, Hutus and Tutsis continue to exist, Kurds and Armenians, refuse to be a historical footnote, first nations in the USA are still around to haunt the self-congratulatory majority, Aboriginals are a reminder that Australia was never a "terra nullis" and so on. The world refuses to obey the will and the power of the powerful or the victor's narrations.

By implication, the ethic of reconciliation views the "other" either in a Gandhian sense as "wonder-full" or as an "autonomous force" and an equal. Through its nurturing it allowed people to say that conflict was regrettable, that co-responsibility must be taken, shared and that no "abstract" right operates until it is resolved in a dialogical framework.

It has a second element: that it is impossible to look at people as unchanging clumps. Everyone has become an "other" and every "other" has a historicity and unique forms of development.

The ethic of Reconciliation in its broadest sense is not about negotiation – it just makes the latter possible in a new way. It is not about cultural relativism and fragmentation, but an attempt to create broader and broader forms of civility.

If there is a problem with much of the analysis of South Africa's transition it is that it turns the process too pragmatic and too abstracted from the feelings and solidarities that have allowed it to occur. Discursive and ideological shifts cannot occur piecemeal, either instrumentally and/or by bargaining. This shift was facilitated by a remarkable emotive and cultural adjustment, a powerful shift in the subterranean belief systems of both the powerful and those who waited for their turn to power. True, there was a revolution within the revolution led by corporate interests that proved to be decisively influential during the South African transition; but the shift in the "national ontology" came from the robe and the cross, across denominations, from above and from below.

Transitions we have learnt, are not about economic crises and the process of violence and negotiation that stir them on – they cannot be reduced to the economic interest-level alone; they are profound events in the modalities of politics, ideology and culture. They are also moments that are liminal, between and betwixt, that create all kinds of interventions, all kinds of new status groups and status scripts.

To be more concrete: if the “nation” as constituted through modern states always involves five elements in that it combines an “epos”, a “topos”, a “genus”, an “ethos” and a “logos” that fixes its particularity and therefore in the same act, “includes” and “excludes” in order to constitute its “demos”, each side’s constitutive elements of belonging were and had to be in discordance and contestation with each other. It is very improbable that the new South Africa could have been imagined through negotiating committees, and although the “topos” was this “camp” without a name (Afrika Borwa? Suid Afrika?) – any act of the constitutive imagination exercised unfathomable repressions.

Each one’s historicity was contested and their meanings clashed. Their discourses generated symbolic static, tension and non-negotiability. Unlike all other recent transitions to democracy where their national questions were more or less settled (and where such settlements were shifty they fragmented), the “national ontologies” here were insurmountable. To re-state the argument: South Africa’s democratisation was unique in that try as we may, to compare one transition to another and especially the South African one to others of the “third wave”, for example the Latin American ones, seems difficult on one residual and irreducible factor: that the “national question” was not in question in the latter, but in need for development in the former! The nineteenth and twentieth century constructions of nationhood in the Americas had settled the one special question: the ontology of belonging, i.e. the discursive (sometimes deeply ideological) construction of the indigene.

What permitted the negotiation to proceed was an “ideational” shift into a third space, possible only if brought onto the historical terrain by any party or movement that could abstract itself from the “historical”. That is, at a certain moment, a discursive shift does occur, a tangential space is opened and instead of the “material”, the “ideational” holds sway. A process that, allows a Mandela into the “turner of the other cheek / and when that finished / (the) turner of the other”. Of course such a third space cannot in its ideas throw a blanket over the entire terrain, but it did cover enough of the landscape to become the new “common ground” for a transformation of the competing versions of nationalism.

What provided for this shift was an ecumenical, normative and ecclesiastical conception initially pioneered by Christian churches from “both” sides: the

establishment of English and Afrikaans speaking churches, the SACC and the NGK (the Dutch Reformed Church), arriving at a consensus about the “regrettable past”, the role and actions of the Churches after the historic Rustenburg synod of the NGK and the declaration that bound them to a common project.

The ecclesiastical abstraction from history, this third space, could in turn facilitate the work of negotiations and their pragmatic shifts as long as atonement was ever-present: then, the negotiations could lead to the pragmatics of compromise over “Land, Bones and Money”.

So, without a third space that facilitates the dominance of an ethic of reconciliation, negotiations cannot proceed. Without the negotiations of the hard questions over land and prior dispossession, over who is a citizen and how resources are to be redistributed, the ethic remains a profound moral stand without substance.

Remember: despite “forgiveness” and its symbolic presentations during the Truth Commission, these rituals were performative, indeed sampled for public use. They were “tricky” in their own right, but reality was trickier still. Despite, the “third-space” of regret and sorrow, of emotion and tears, the “unquiet dead” were not vindicated. It is the necessary theatre for future generations, as the real stuff of earth, calcium and gold are negotiated, and re-negotiated, until there is a breakthrough.

We were blessed there with incredible forms of leadership but we were also blessed with unprecedented forms of popular participation from trade unions, community associations, youth and women’s organisations.

The harsh reality of forgiveness and reconciliation always involves an “erasure” – the unquiet dead are never reconciled with the living. Unfortunately it is the living, who reconciles issues, despite the dead. The latter haunt any settlement. As long as the living has enough moral and ethical ground to justify their actions, the settlement holds. As long as the living create frameworks that create conditions for a viable “being with others”, the relationship with the dead and the lost can, however, be haunting and difficult – a benign nightmare. What are those frameworks that allow that?

Cyprus is a tragic story – but the tragedy and loss, does not compare with Rwanda’s experience of genocide. The mention of the genocide and its memories, and I know this from first hand experience, makes people physically ill. But the country holds, and the people have made great strides beyond the tragic moment. European countries, despite the barbarism of their dealing with each other over two world wars, have managed to create a European Union.

From the perspective of a South African experience the question that immediately arises is whether there is such a third-space that allows conflicting claims to abstract themselves from a traumatic historical past on this island. Your answer might be, as it should be, that there is a movement of rapprochement, a strong bi-communal current that is gaining voice. That alone, from our perhaps, skewed angle will not be sufficient. Such a space should be a medium of that movement's realisation, not the movement itself. For many of you, and for the droves of international journalists I have been reading, Europe (the entry into Europe, that is) provides such a space, perhaps the only space that the contemporary moment is opening up for the island. Does this real artefact called Europe offer such a platform?

The second burning question that a South African scholar would ask is whether there is, within that space, a way of owning the past in its regrettable forms in both communities? Whether there is, behind the wagging fingers, a way that allows both sides to say that the past was regrettable and we are ready to own it, speak about it and find the courage to redress past perceptions and injustices? Without that, in our case, institutions like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission would have been a farce.

The third question is whether there is a sufficient critical mass of people who have moved beyond forms of racism and ethnic derogation where, as I have mentioned above, the other is not "surplus" and removable, not "useful" for short-term goals and/or a "non-person" for inclusion? The response that I read from the press and from the scientific studies I have encountered is a forked one: I read a "yes" and a "no".

Fourthly, is there enough civil society participation in the bi-communal endeavour; enough to create an unceasing pressure towards a solution? The referendum's results, very superficially, seem to say that about 23 per cent of Cypriots said "yes" to the Annan plan. What did the "yes" mean and what, more importantly, did the "no" mean?

If these four questions can be answered in the affirmative, then there is the prospect of a significant ENDOGENOUS negotiation over what I termed, the issues of "Land, Bones and Money".

I am not an expert on the island's socio-political history and the differences between South Africa and Cyprus are stark. Nevertheless the choice is starker still: do you choose, and you have to choose because no-one else can choose, between the logic of reconciliation or fragmentation? The former is more difficult than the latter. The latter, however easy, will leave the Cyprus problem unsolved, even if Turkey joins the European Union.

Djelal Kadir's intervention is animated by an admirable impatience: "we must move the status quo beyond dialogue and into negotiation". And such a move has to be accompanied by the hard questions: "how much – where – when – whose – in what proportion – and, when – how soon?" He advocates an active process that demands and exacts pressure for the move to occur. It has to be, he asserts, international (not global, not engineered by the "big powers") and it has to be informed by the people of Cyprus who are far ahead of the politicians who rule over boundaries.

Furthermore, he responds and criticises some of my naïve assumptions. He explicitly criticises any notion of "reconciliation". Such a word, "lexically and politically" might have been apt for South Africa, but it is inappropriate for Cyprus. The notion of reconciliation has been "appropriated" and "corrupted" by "one of the interested parties in the conflict". He opts instead for words denoting phenomena: "co-existence, redistributive justice and co-governance".

Nevertheless, I think that my point was missed: as a "word" it is inappropriate for South Africa as well! My point was: that it was impossible to arrive at negotiations without a "third space" which allowed for what I termed an "ethic of reconciliation" to emerge. Such an ethic was and continues to be a product of struggles against domination and a way of looking at the "other", at "each other" and at "anybody" as "non-surplus" and as a contingent/eliminable factor.

Even if I win the first round of clarifications, his critique challenges my quandary as to whether a "third space" can be created in the context of the European accession of the island. Here, his insights are uncompromising: that Europe as a "noun" and European as an "adjective" in the context of Cyprus means "non-Asiatic". They are part of a racist lexicon. Europe itself has "already been imploded into the caldera of the political volcano you are trying to sort out".

Thirdly, the "public sphere", although necessary, cannot be like South Africa's: an endogenous political process because such a sphere on the island is "rotten"; it "exudes so much rancour" and breeds "so much suspicion". It has been made to rot by the "command cohort of (the island's) realpolitik."

I can only respond in three ways:

As a sociologist I would have to be convinced of some social facts. At first I would have to be convinced that there is a social movement – i.e. that there is a sustained upsurge of people (or some strata/classes etc., of people) – that is jointly challenging the status quo despite borders. Or, that it exists even in a weaker version – that there are two or more movements on either side of the "line" that are in search of a connection – a connection that might facilitate their "joining up"

through creative intermediaries. I cannot see many signs of that but, I stand to be corrected. Rather, the desire of people to cross borders despite the status quo that Kadir celebrates is about something important that we have to understand in a more comprehensive way. It is not, and again I stand to be corrected, about a new sociality.

Secondly, another social fact would be whether the “wonderful and like-minded people” that he evokes so well – mobile intellectuals, members of epistemic communities, professionals and dreamers – are robust enough in their shared visions to start a contemporary “cross-ethnic” (excuse the ethnocentrism) “Filiki Etaireia” for the re-unification of the island. The signs are not there for the robustness of such a rapprochement, but again, I might be mistaken.

As a South African sociologist and part of the new popular-democratic leadership in that country, I understand “fortress Europe” and its racist connotations all too well. It would be the height of hilarity if South Africa tried to accede to the European Union. But from the margins of the old colonial world I see the European Union as a significant new terrain: firstly, it is imperative that an anti-racist European Union prevails that is open to an egalitarian international agenda. Therefore, the accession of Turkey is of a profound ideological significance. Secondly, it is precisely (even if it is misguided, naïve or impure) the desire of Greek and Turkish Cypriots to be part of the European Union that might offer a “space” or a “third space” for an ethic of reconciliation to emerge. My question still stands: can this peculiar moment happen?

Finally as an ecumenical intellectual I find it hard not to strive against the logic of fragmentation. It would be the easiest path to leave the border where it is, only to worry about it later when Europe dismantles it; or, if Turkey is blocked from Europe, the Great Ottoman Union of 2020 keeps it. It comes down to agency, no matter what the objective constraints – this much the South African experience has taught us.

“The Greek Nation”: An Inherently Totalitarian Concept. Concerns to be Borne in Mind during the Reconciliation Process in Cyprus

John Milios

This commentary will focus on a crucial ideological dimension of the power relations governing the Greek-Cypriot social formation: Greek nationalism, with the totalitarian elements it entails. This dimension is a decisive factor in allowing the Greek-Cypriot authorities to perpetuate their “rejectionist” strategy, as they face the prospect of a united and federated (Greek-Turkish) Cypriot polity.

I will build my argument on the three theses that follow:

Thesis 1

The nation in its modern-day sense is an inseparable aspect of the capitalist social order, very tangibly expressing the political and ideological-cultural predominance of capital, which homogenises every community within a political territory into an “ethnic community”. This homogenisation “effaces” the boundaries between the classes, i.e. class power and exploitation (transforming them into demarcation lines between professions) or merely relativises them (representing them as something secondary in the broader context of national unity and cohesion).

The state embodies the interests of the entire social capital of the national polity. At the level of the economy, the state contributes decisively to creating the general material conditions for reproduction of capitalist relations. This includes political management of the workforce, interventions for boosting the profitability of overall social capital, state management of money, the institutional and legal framework underwriting the “freedom” of the market. These material conditions both differ from country to country, despite the fact that they tend to converge between the advanced capitalist countries, above all within the regional free trade areas. At the political and ideological-cultural level the state legitimates the exercise of bourgeois political power as “national independence”.

However, these strategic interests of the capitalist class that are being “condensed” by the state always entail a compromise with the labouring classes: There is, therefore, always the possibility of a change in the class relation of forces

(and thus of implementing different policies or even forms of government) within the capitalist power relations.

These compromises of the ruling classes with the labouring classes are an indispensable condition for the stabilisation of capitalism: Any form of class power can reproduce itself only if it achieves to win the consensus or at least the tolerance of the ruled classes. The Gramscian (and Poulantzian) notion of hegemony refers exactly to this dimension of class power. Nationalism is a traditional ideology through which the ruling classes in capitalist social formations ensure their hegemony over the ruled classes. And to the extent that “the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas” (K. Marx, *The German Ideology*, 1845), nationalism becomes an ideology of the popular masses.

Nationalism is supported by the way the capitalist state is structured: a nation-state. To name only one example, the right to elect a government or to candidate as a MP in any modern state, is granted not to the permanent inhabitants of the country but only to the state’s citizens, i.e. persons belonging to the people-nation.

The (Greek) nation in its present-day form (as a community of language and of “fate” encompassing even people beyond the borders of the state) was created, and exists, as the result of a process expressing the hegemony of the forces of capital over (antagonistic modes of production in) society. Its other aspects include the claim – and achievement – of political self-determination and state sovereignty (in the same historic space of capitalist hegemony).

The nation constitutes the historically shaped and specifically capitalist unity (cohesion) of the antagonistic classes of a social formation, tending to unify the “internal”, i.e. the national, and demarcate and distinguish it from the “external”, i.e. the “non-national”. What is involved is a complex and relatively autonomous process of nation-building in the age of capitalism (i.e. the age of nations and nation-states).

The creation of a nation-state often entails the emergence of irredentist demands: the desire of national populations living in areas that have not been incorporated into the nation state to become part of that state; the demand for territorial expansion of the state so that it may embrace “the entire nation”.

Thesis 2

Within a nation state, the nation manifests itself as a totalitarian tendency: incorporation of the populations of the state into the main body of the nation, differentiation from negative discrimination against whoever does not become part of the nation, sometimes to the point of expelling them from the main body of the nation.

Nation-building: the process of political structuring of a nation through attainment of independence is typically described in terms of the “tendency towards freedom” initially implied in it: emancipation from an empire or multi-national state entity (embodying, for those seeking “national independence”, national subjugation and oppression). The “tendency towards freedom” is frequently manifested through the irrevocable decision of large sectors of the population seeking independence to activate the principle of “Freedom or Death”, sacrificing their lives for the sake of national integration in an independent nation state, so confirming the political soundness of Lenin’s thesis for adoption by the workers’ movement and the Left of the demand for national self-determination of every people.

The “tendency towards freedom” was admittedly more dramatically visible in the early national movements of the nineteenth century, such as the Greek Revolution of 1821.

However, alongside the “tendency towards freedom”, no less inherent in the character of every nation, there also exists the “tendency towards totalitarianism”. This is the tendency towards expansion and at the same time homogenisation of the “internal” dimension of the national polity, that is to say the national-cultural homogenisation of the populations who will be located within this polity, with their subjection as an integrated whole to the “character” and rules of the (new) class sovereignty and power: A class power distinguishable from neighbouring systems of class power through its particular national characteristics.

The “tendency towards totalitarianism” becomes evident even in the bourgeois revolutionary movements of the early nineteenth century. Thus, for example, in the Proclamation of Alexander Ypsilantis of 24 February 1821 inaugurating the Revolution of 1821 we read:

“The Morea, Thessaly, Bulgaria, Serbia, the islands of the archipelago, in a word the whole of Greece, has taken arms to throw off the heavy yoke of the barbarians” (emphasis added).

This extract expresses the view common to those Orthodox intellectuals and to the popular masses actively engaged in the revolutionary struggle against the “ancien régime”. Inevitably they saw the struggle as national: a struggle for national liberation. These masses, themselves products of an ongoing process of transformation in social relations, were to be found mainly in the southern and coastal areas of present-day Greece, as well as in some mountain areas. They saw themselves as Greek, irrespective of the language they spoke or of their particular cultural traditions (for example the Albanian speakers of Hydra, Souli and elsewhere). They projected this national identity of theirs onto all the (nationally amorphous, for the most part) Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire.

The “tendency towards totalitarianism”, towards national homogenisation of all – without exception – of the peoples of the polity under construction, is thus inherent even in the most democratic and liberal variants of bourgeois domination (when the bourgeoisie are leading the armed struggle for an independent democratic nation-state).

We may see, then, that the “tendency towards totalitarianism” does not operate only “inwardly”, within a particular cultural and linguistic population (evolving into a nation in the present-day sense of the term) along with whatever “minorities” may happen to be on the territory it inhabits. At the same time it also operates “outwardly”, seeking to expand everywhere it does not meet with adequate (national) resistance, incorporating and homogenising every territory (and every other nationality), subsuming it in the prospective national-state structuring of the dominant nationality. To put the matter differently, we could say that the “tendency towards totalitarianism” entails not merely an inward-turning impulse (national homogenisation) but also an outward-looking impulse of national expansion, even when its predominance is no longer particularly likely, given that it is coming up against the homogenisation-expansion process of the neighbouring nationality.

The “tendency towards freedom” and “tendency towards totalitarianism” co-exist in that indivisible ideological-cultural unity that is nationalism. Nationalism proclaims the timeless indivisible unity of the people-nation, and the unquestionable historically and ethically validated propriety (in conformity with the principles of law) of their every position and claim in the given international political conjuncture. Of course when the process of constructing the nation state has been consummated, i.e. following attainment of the much-vaunted national independence, the “tendency towards totalitarianism” will establish itself as the predominant facet in power relations. To cite a formulation of Nikos Poulantzas: “The enclosures implicit in the constitution of the modern people-nation are only so awesome because they are also fragments of a history that is totalised and capitalised by the state. Genocide is the elimination of what become ‘foreign bodies’ of the national history and territory: it expels them beyond space and time (...) Concentration camps are a modern invention in the additional sense that the frontier-gates close on ‘anti-nationals’ for whom time and national historicity are in suspense” (Nikos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism*, London/New York, Verso, 1980, pp. 114-115).

Thus nationalism does not survive merely as the predominant facet in social relations, national unity and national interest (in this way obstructing realisation of the class unity and the class interests of the labouring strata and their antagonism to the predominant capitalist interests). At the same time it also serves to construct this national unity and these national interests in contradistinction and (potentially, and depending on the historical conjuncture) in conflict with the national interests of other nation-state constructs, other national unities.

The tendency towards totalitarianism is a tendency in the direction of eradication of “the alien” or “the foreigner” from the main body of the nation: whether through incorporation into the national population or, to the extent that this is impossible, through expulsion beyond the borders of the state, or conversion into a “minority” with limited rights. In no instance does it favour federal solutions on the basis of cultural and institutional equality of the different national communities.

Thesis 3

All European nationalism is, by virtue of the manner of its historical composition, racist. Since World War II racism has attained a mainly “cultural” dimension: People are differentiated on the basis of their “specific culture” (embedded in a specific history). In Europe, this “culture” is mainly conceived as the “culture” of a “race” with “ancient historical roots” and less as the “culture” (or the “civilisation”, the “way of life” etc.) of a polity: Most European nations are “blood” nations (as opposed to “soil” nations such as those of America). A person becomes a citizen of a European country not for having been born in the territory of this country, but as a descendant of a (male) parent belonging to the people-nation. However, there are no clear “demarcation lines” between “cultural” and “blood” nationalism: a) they are both cultural even if they refer to blood because it is a cultural perception on blood; b) they are all blood nationalism because nations have all committed acts of blood in the past to maintain their nationhood (wars, border control, expansion, empires, revolts etc).

In this dimension, nationalism is inseparable (whether overtly or in a latent or disguised form) with a “differentiating racism”: it proclaims in each instance the superiority of a specific nation as against other nations, connecting this superiority with a supposed “blood oneness” of a historic people-nation. In circumstances of heightened national-state antagonism it also proclaims the (racial, cultural and “historical”) inferiority of competitor or enemy nations. Devaluation of the “foreigner”, but also the evaluative dichotomies European/Asian, Western/Eastern, civilised/barbarian, etc., flourish on the soil of the (latently) racist ideology that is inextricably interwoven with nationalism.

This ideology of the popular nation (the historical continuity and national “unity” of the chosen people, its destiny and its glorious future), which constitutes the basis of nationalism, acquires an aggressive-militaristic character in the form of the far right and fascism.

Epilogue

The Greek nation was constituted historically as a “blood nation”, with a pronounced racist element of “national/tribal superiority” as against “others”.

This helps to explain the ease with which the strategy of the Greek-Cypriot bourgeoisie became hegemonic in the mid-1950s and has remained so to the present day, in establishing a “second Hellenic state” in Cyprus: While interpreting failure of union (enosis) of Cyprus with Greece (which it rejects because it would mean transformation into a province of Greece) as the outcome of machinations by “foreigners”, it has refused to implement the solution of the Greek-Turkish state agreed upon in the framework of the international community: then, in the mid-1960s, through naked violation of the treaties of Zurich and London, today through rejection of the Annan Plan.

The opposition to racist Greek nationalism in southern Cyprus makes a decisive contribution to facilitating a solution of the Cyprus problem on a federal basis.

Book Reviews

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Turkey and the EU: An Awkward Candidate for EU Membership?

Harun Arikan

**Ashgate Publishers, (Aldershot, Hampshire, 2006) xi + 291 pp
ISBN: 0 7546 4762 5**

Ever since his Progress and Development Party (Ak Partisi, AKP) swept to power in the elections of November 2002 with a huge parliamentary majority, Recep Tayyip Erdogan's AKP government has won high marks in EU circles for carrying out an impressive range of reforms. In December 2004, satisfied with Turkey's record on the Copenhagen criteria, the European Council recommended that accession negotiations open on 3 October 2005. In all previous cases the start of accession negotiations by candidate countries has heralded a process that inexorably led to full membership. However, no one in Turkey or Europe could take ultimate Turkish accession for granted. Indeed, after a period of achieving unprecedented progress with reforms to satisfy membership conditions, Turks are facing a chorus of scepticism in several European circles regarding the wisdom of admitting Turkey into the EU.

On what grounds do EU members object to Turkey's membership? Does the EU approach to Turkey's membership differ from that which Brussels pursued vis-à-vis the Central-East European countries (the CEECs) that achieved membership in 2004? What type of relationship does the EU envisage to have with Turkey? These are the leading questions that Harun Arikan seeks to answer in his detailed and ambitious study which provides a remarkable 33-page bibliography. Utilising an impressive array of sources, there is practically no dimension of the Turkey-EU relationship that the author does not consider. While his overall expertise is not in doubt, his book has many shortcomings that detract from its worth.

The grounds on which many Europeans oppose Turkey's membership are variations of the oft-repeated argument that Turkey is too big, too poor, too Muslim and non-European. Whether the reasons cited by opponents of Turkish accession stand up to close scrutiny or not is a matter of opinion. In Arikan's view these do not justify keeping Turkey out of the EU. It is true that Turkish living standards lag considerably behind most of the EU countries. On the other hand, the author shows that Turkish per capita GDP is similar to those of Bulgaria and Romania that have

already become EU members. Compared to European countries, a high proportion of Turkey's labour force is employed in agriculture and the enormity of the task of preparing this sector to achieve European standards is commonly acknowledged. However, this has been true as well in regards to Bulgaria and Romania. In a notable respect, Turkey can claim to have outperformed many European countries in achieving impressive rates of economic growth. Still, as the author points out, Turkey's large population (reportedly 73 million in 2007) and the potential costs of elevating Turkish living standards to those of EU members are major considerations among those Europeans who object or have deep reservations regarding Turkish accession. Furthermore, just how European Turkey is has been a recurring question among those Europeans who are sceptical about Turkey's qualification to become a part of the EU's civilisational project. European opposition to Turkey on cultural grounds was famously stated by former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the architect of the EU's controversial new constitution. In an interview with *Le Monde* on 8 November 2002, arguing that 95 per cent of Turks do not live in Europe, he bluntly declared that Turkey's accession would "be the end of Europe". Arikian notes the weight of the cultural factor in European opposition to Turkish accession but does not elaborate adequately on this all-important dimension in European-Turkish relations.

That the EU has treated Turkey differentially from other applicants is a theme that runs throughout this book. The EU supported the CEECs in their quest for membership with an effective pre-accession strategy by using the accession carrot to help them achieve the needed reforms for EU convergence. By contrast EU policy "to Turkey has neither included a firm accession commitment, nor a clearly defined comprehensive accession strategy to support Turkey's efforts to integrate itself with the EU". As the author repeatedly states the key to explaining this differential approach is that the EU is not really interested in facilitating Turkish accession. As he puts it, Brussels has pursued "a containment strategy" vis-à-vis Turkey, "designed to delay indefinitely the prospect of membership while anchoring Turkey in the European structure through close relations". It is no wonder that European caginess regarding Turkish accession has weakened the standing of pro-EU forces in Turkish society, a conclusion that has been reached by numerous other observers of Turkish-EU relations.

For many years the EU petitioned Turkey to undertake reforms that would end restrictions on the human rights of its citizens, and complained that Ankara lagged behind other applicants in achieving such progress. While the author notes the human rights deficit as an impediment to Turkish progress in its EU accession process, he argues that the EU could have facilitated Turkish advances in this area by giving Turkey the kind of support it provided to the CEECs. Above all, whereas the CEECs could expect accession at the end of the process of political reforms, no

such commitment was forthcoming in Turkey's case even after the EU's Helsinki summit that declared Turkey to be a candidate for accession in 1999. These arguments are undoubtedly plausible. However, the reader would have been better served if the author focused as much on the Turkish political scene as he did on the Europeans in explaining the difficulties of achieving human rights reforms in Turkey.

Not all of the EU member states have the same stake concerning Turkish accession, and there are some members for whom the issue is of no consequence at all. The author could have usefully surveyed those members that play active roles in the deliberations concerning Turkey in EU councils in order to explain their policy preferences. Obviously, EU member Greece has had a special and powerful stake in Turkey's membership and the author sensibly devotes a full chapter to evaluating the Greek factor. Unfortunately for the reader, beyond describing the issues that divide Greece and Turkey and stating that Greece effectively delayed progress on Turkey's EU membership path, the author's analysis sheds little light. Arikan offers no explanation for the change in Greek policy toward Turkey's EU membership in the aftermath of the Abdullah Ocalan fiasco and the "earthquake diplomacy" between Greece and Turkey in 1999. Also, surprisingly, there is no reference to the remarkable policy change on the Cyprus issue of the AKP government that paved the way to the Turkish Cypriot endorsement of the Annan plan in April 2004.

This volume, published in 2006, is a revised and updated version of an earlier edition of Arikan's book. It is most unfortunate that the updating has been inadequate, neglecting important developments such as the accession of the Republic of Cyprus to the EU in April 2004 and the headaches this has caused for Turkey. There are other shortcomings as well: the most obvious are the dozens of spelling errors that are found throughout the book. Surely this and related problems such as poor wording and missing words, could have been fixed by copy editing. In the final analysis, this volume will be judged primarily on how much light the author sheds on the larger issues related to the Turkey-EU relationship. The author makes a credible case that the EU has not treated Turkey as well as other applicants for accession. However, he is not always convincing in his often repeated thesis that the EU has been pursuing a containment strategy toward Turkey. Besides, he could have made a greater contribution to the literature on Turkey-EU by providing a good deal more analysis of Turkish domestic politics and how it affected Ankara's approach to the EU.

Tozun Bahcheli

Dancing Fear and Desire: Race, Sexuality, and Imperial Politics in Middle Eastern Dance

Stavros Stavrou Karayanni
Wilfrid Laurier University Press, (Canada, 2004) xv + 244 pp
ISBN: 0-88920-454-3

The book *Dancing Fear and Desire* takes a comprehensive look at the history of Middle Eastern dance and the intertwined connection between developments in culture and the influence these changes had on the dance. There are many factors including race, gender, class, and imperialism that relate and have affected the types of Middle Eastern dances we see today. The Cypriot author of the book, Stavros Stavrou Karayanni, examines numerous writings and sources to provide a thorough and well researched analysis of belly dance and its relationship with homosexuality and post-colonialism.

First, belly dance originated in the Middle Eastern area of the world and is sometimes referred to as Oriental dance. The dance has the movement focused on the arms, head, and torso. The footsteps are small, and very little physical space is used. Moreover, there are many different variations of belly dance. The *tsifteteli* is the Greek version that has very sexual body movements of the torso. Another solo dance performed in Greece, Cyprus, and Turkey is called the *zeibekiko*. Regardless, in all of the dances the performer's gaze is very important. It appears that the performer is in a trance-like state. Some interpretations of the Middle Eastern dance is that this trance helped the dancer unite with a spiritual god or goddess and gave the dancer power. Kohl, a black powder, is applied around the eyes as a sign of concealment and mystery. The tradition of Middle Eastern dance has an extensive history, but changes started to occur once it was introduced to foreigners.

Karayanni takes an in-depth look at how Middle Eastern dance appeared to European men when they first encountered and wrote about it in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The traveller's impressions of the Oriental dance seemed to imply sex and deviance from the excessive body movement. The famous dancer Kuchuk Hanem first met Gustave Flaubert and George Curtis in 1850 in Egypt. Karayanni examines their writings to show how the West viewed this type of dance and how European attitudes during imperialism affected the perceptions of the dance today.

Flaubert has the stereotypical view of Kuchuk as being exotic, scandalising, and passionate and writes that the dance and dress is sexually enticing. Indeed, Flaubert sees the spectacle as a sexual invitation and the only meaning and purpose of the performance is for his pleasure. He does not appreciate the dance and simply degrades the dancer to a whore or prostitute. In a letter to a friend, Flaubert dehumanises Kuchuk to make her seem like a machine.

Yet, he also stated that she displayed a masculine quality. In Islamic society, a woman is not biologically inferior to a man. In fact, she is seen as powerful and dangerous. Then, things such as polygamy, sexual segregation, and submission at home were used by men to suppress her power. Since Kuchuk avoided these social rules, she had obtained this masculine quality.

Conversely, Kuchuk would have viewed the encounter as being very different. This was her way to earn a living and make money. Since Flaubert was wealthy, she would offer him what he expected which was exoticism in her dance.

George Curtis describes Kuchuk's dance as against Western morals and views her as racially inferior. The suggestive movements embarrassed Westerners who had specific posture with controlled hips, shoulders, and lumbar region. The dance seemed against their scruples, and the traveller's thought the people should be more civilised and refined. The dance was too sexual and created uneasiness in the Westerner even though they had a desire for the dancer. The erotic, sexual and savage dance was intriguing and desired by the individual but disapproved by society. Therefore, as colonisation took place and western beliefs were implied on other cultures, changes were made to belly dance.

During the 1800s, Mohamed Ali tried to modernise, industrialise, and Westernise Egypt which led to colonial influence and dependence. The public dancing girls were prohibited from Cairo since they seemed indecent and unacceptable to Europeans and needed to be banned for Egypt to become modern. As a result, the numbers of dancing boys increased.

Male dancers had been popular throughout Egypt, the Middle East, and Central Asia. Sometimes in Turkey, the younger boys would be dressed like girls. Even in Uzbekistan, public female dancers were not allowed so boys danced instead. These dances were considered lustful but not indecent. Their general appearance was feminine, and the dance was the same when done by women. Either male or female dancers could perform at a home, marriage, birth, circumcision, or festival, but sometimes male dancers would be preferred. The audience enjoyed watching drag because they could not tell the difference between the males and females.

When the Western traveller first learned that the dancers are male, his emotion changed from desire to feelings of frustration and discomfort in the way the boys appeared. He felt that his ethics and taboos had been crossed. Although the dance performance was quite similar to female dancers, the performance now seemed homoerotic, indecent, disgusting, and threatening to the traveller. Even if the Westerner enjoyed watching the male dancers, the dance alluded to sex and this would suggest homosexual desire. Therefore, a phobia of male dancers began to develop. The fear and disrespect of homosexual men now moved into Middle Eastern dance. Egypt's morality was being questioned since female public dancing was restricted but male dancers were still respectable. Soon after British colonisation in Egypt, Egyptians started to criticise their own customs and ceremonies.

The author makes an important point in that he believes the development of homophobia and laws against sodomy in some countries, including Cyprus, was a product of colonialism. For example in Pakistan, these laws are not religious. Also just seven years after British rule in Cyprus, a law against sodomy was made. Therefore, homosexuality is not a Western phenomena but homophobia is. The negative view of homosexuality also spilled into dance traditions. Karayanni writes "... the litigation against dance and dancers strongly parallels legislation on sexuality and, more specifically, the spectacle of homosexual sex. As queer sexuality contradicts the norm, Middle Eastern dance contradicts proper posture and upsets respectability. (114)." As homophobia spread through the society, its effects were seen in dance by the social limitations of male dancers.

Similarly to Egypt, Greece and Cyprus were strongly influenced by Western ideas and beliefs. When described by Europeans, Greece was often viewed as part of Europe but vastly Oriental and uncivilised in their customs and manners. In response, Greece has been trying to remove any Eastern heritage in order to make Western allegiances. The cultural cleansing began when the elite focused on worshiping ancestors and the past. They wanted to deny Ottoman Empire associations and concentrate on classical Greece.

In 1922, large numbers of people from Asia Minor were forced out of their towns and resettled in Greece. The Greeks did not want to accept or incorporate the culture and traditions that these people brought with them. During Metaxas' dictatorship in the 1930s, the refugee's music, which has a distinct Eastern sound, was banned in Greece as well as in Turkey in order to westernise the areas. The refugees saw themselves as an independent society partly because the Greeks mistrusted them. Their music and dance traditions were not respected, appreciated, or approved.

Then in the 1960s, there was a large research project led by Dora Stratou's dance company to research traditional Greek customs, folk dances, and music. She omitted anything with other cultural influences and presented a commercialised, unauthentic view of Greek heritage that changed the dance traditions in Greece. The government wanted to support this identity and sense of nationalism and promoted her work. Unfortunately, Stratou chose only the acceptable forms of dance and movement to include in her research. Any excessive or threatening dance movements that were not considered modest enough were absent from the Greek performances. In order not to embarrass the viewer, more tame and desexualised versions of the dance were performed.

Stratou also only acknowledges the predictable and respectable dance movements of males since Greek and Greek Cypriots are more conservative and scrutinising when watching Oriental dance. When men perform the tsifteteli it is controversial; the zeibekiko is more acceptable because it has an assertive, firm, and masculine form that is in control. Therefore, the zeibekiko became more popular since it upheld masculine behaviour. The audience is comfortable watching the male dancers because the masculine movements and machismo character that is expected in a man is approved and admired. Because of this, the zeibekiko is still accepted in Greek traditional dance even though its roots are traced back to Asia Minor. Contrastingly, the tsifteteli, which is also Eastern, gradually became undesirable in the society because of the feminine, sexual movements. People even assert sexist misconceptions claiming that the tsifteteli looks better performed by a woman than a man.

Around this same time in Cyprus, during the 1960s and 1970s, there was hatred between the Turkish and Greek Cypriots. After the civil war in 1974, the Greeks wanted to oppress anything Eastern – including belly dance. Cyprus wanted to appear and identify itself as European so it acknowledged and rejected certain traditions.

To illustrate his point, Karayanni gives details of the time he saw the Eurovision Song Contest in 1976 to describe how different societies perceived belly dance. At one point in the contest, Mariza Koch gives a televised singing performance. Her song is about the war between northern and southern Cyprus and the suffering of Cypriots. Yet, in Turkey the broadcast is quickly cancelled and instead replaced with belly dancing. As a young boy, the author really enjoyed both Mariza Koch's performance as well as the belly dancing. However, this would not be encouraged or accepted for boys in his society. Because Cypriot nationalism had become important and his Greek culture was stressed, he did not learn about the tradition or meaning behind the dance he observed. Hence, the author was not exposed to belly dance as much because he was a Greek Cypriot and male.

Even today, male belly dancers are not respected. The dancers are rare and hardly talked or written about anymore. This is because, as an article written in 2000 explains, a male dancer's performance is scrutinised as being seductive and alluring but generally not approved of by European society. Homophobia has eliminated male Middle Eastern dancers from society's view.

Middle Eastern dance performed by females has changed too. The Hollywood version of belly dance in the West has been remarketed to fit their views of gipsy females expressing feminism, fertility, and romance. Dance classes and performances have tamed the sensuality to appeal to white, middle class women. Hollywood has exploited Middle Eastern dance with performances showing little dancing skill and talent and emphasising the dancer's glamour and exoticness. Similarly in Egypt, choreographers have made adaptations to desexualise the dance because they have adopted Western attitudes and are embarrassed by the sensuality of male and female performers.

In conclusion, Karayanni discusses different sources and analyses their accounts and opinions of Middle Eastern dance performances throughout history. He determines that the West has interacted with Middle Eastern dance during times of colonialism through to the present by suppressing the dance to a more modest, unprovocative, and respectable version to follow their morals. Once popular and common, male dancers have now been restricted due to society's homophobia. They are instructed to dance more masculine so the audience will not feel threatened by the ambiguous gender role. With *Dancing Fear and Desire*, Karayanni informs the public to recognise these changes that have developed in belly dance over the years with hopes of breaking down the stereotypes and biases that have been attached to Middle Eastern dance. A very interesting and fascinating book indeed.

Constantinos N. Phellas

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Journal of Southern Europe and the Balkans

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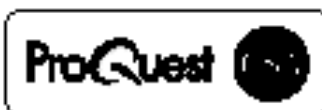
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